



MR RUSSELL.

AS SPARKISH.

THE
NEW ENGLISH DRAMA,

WITH
PREFATORY REMARKS,

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES, AND NOTES,

Critical and Explanatory ;

*Being the only Edition existing which is faithfully marked with
the*

STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

As Performed

At the Theatres Royal.

By (W. OXBERRY) COMEDIAN.

VOLUME EIGHTH.

CONTAINING

COUNTRY GIRL. — JANE SHORE. — CORIOLANUS.
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND. — MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

London.

PUBLISHED FOR THE PROPRIETORS, BY W. SIMPKIN, AND
R. MARSHALL, STATIONERS' COURT, LUDGATE-STREET ;
AND C. CHAPPLE, 66, FLEET-MALL.

1818,

Printed by the Press of W. Osberry and Co.
8, White-hart-Yard.

Orberry's Edition.

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A COMEDY;

ALTERED FROM WYCHERLEY,

By David Garrick.

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Remarks.

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

The language and characters of the *Country Girl* are sprightly and entertaining; there is not perhaps much wit or humour in the dialogue, but it is entertaining from its archness, and the characters are natural and well discriminated. Take it altogether the comedy does not belong to the higher class of the drama; it however holds a distinguished place in the second rank of excellence, no little praise, if we consider the many and admirable pieces of which it thus takes precedence.

This style of writing is often more effective in the representation than that which in reality is its superior; it is more easily, and therefore better, acted, with the additional advantage of presenting nothing but what is familiar to the minds and habits of the least informed spectators. A *Moody* and a *Peggy* are by no means of so rare occurrence that we need be at a loss to understand their characters or their language. They speak the dialogue of general life, and though their oddities might raise a smile at the follies of fashion, they would not be considered more whimsical than the many monsters which are daily exhibited uncaged and unfettered in the streets of the metropolis. Perhaps the great beauty of this comedy is, that nothing in it is overcharged; there is much whim but no caricature.

The plot is interesting and sufficiently probable for dramatic purposes:—The incidents are not numerous, but to make amends are compacted into a whole, from which nothing can be taken without detriment to the remainder; in fact the two parts of the plot are so well linked together and so intimately connected, that it is not very easy at first sight to distinguish the double fictions; they have all the appearance of unity. Of course we speak of it as now printed and acted; *Garrick* has deviated considerably from the original, whether to the advantage of the piece in the closet,

we will not pretend to say, but as a production for the stage it certainly has been infinitely improved by his judicious alterations. It is a melancholy truth, that while many of our most brilliant dramas are utterly ineffective when acted, their inferior rivals are played with unbounded approbation; nor is there in this a just cause for wonder; it can scarcely be otherwise; the one is so sublime in its beauty that it is neither to be acted or understood but by minds familiar with poetry, and capable of its excellence; neither the actor nor the very limited powers of scenic deception can realize its fictions; whereas the good-humoured every-day-efforts of the minor drama have all the advantages which arise out of humbleness; every one comprehends, and every one is familiar with them; nothing is attempted but what is realized, and if the reader is never much pleased, the spectator will never be much disappointed.

PROLOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MR. HART.

Poets, like cudgell'd bullies, never do
At first or second blow submit to you;
But will provoke you still, and ne'er have done,
Till you are weary first with laying on.
The late so baffled scribbler of this day,
Though he stands trembling, bids me boldly say,
What we before most plays are us'd to do,
(For poets, out of fear, first draw on you);
In a fierce prologue, the still pit defy,
And ere you speak, like Kastril, give the lie:
But though our Bayes's battles oft I've fought,
And with bruise'd knuckles their dear conquests bought;
Nay, never yet fear'd odds upon the stage,
In prologue dare not hector with the age;
But would take quarter from your saving hands,
Though Bayes within all yielding countermands;
Says you confed'rate wits no quarter give,
Therefore his play shan't ask your leave to live.—
Well, let the vain, rash fop, by huffing so,
Think to obtain the better terms of you;
But we, the actors, humbly will submit,
Now, and at any time, to a full pit;
Nay, often we anticipate your rage,
And murder poets for you on our stage:
We set no guards upon our tiring-room;
But when with flying colours there you come,
We patiently, you see, give up to you
Our poets, virgins, nay, our matrons too.

Stage Directions.

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| By R.H..... | is meant..... | Right Hand. |
| L.H..... | | Left Hand. |
| S.E..... | | Second Entrance. |
| U.E..... | | Upper Entrance. |
| M.D..... | | Middle Door. |
| D.F..... | | Door in Flat. |
| R.H.D..... | | Right Hand Door. |
| L.H.D..... | | Left Hand Door. |

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is one hour and thirty-four minutes. The first act occupies the space of fifteen minutes;—the second, twenty-one;—the third, fifteen; the fourth twenty-five;—and the fifth, eighteen. The half commences, generally, at a quarter before nine o'clock.

Costume.

MOODY.

Drab coat, gilt buttons, scarlet kerseymere waistcoat bound with gold brocade; a pair of drab breeches, shoes, buckles, and drab stockings.

HARCOURT.

Blue coat, white waistcoat, black dress breeches, and opera hat.

SPARKISH.

A black velvet coat, full dress, lined with buff silk, gold buttons; buff silk, waistcoat and breeches, and opera dress hat.

BELVILLE.

A green coat, white waistcoat, dress breeches, and opera hat.

FOOTMAN.

A suit of livery.

COUNTRYMAN.

Drab cloth livery suit.

WILLIAM.

A brown cloth suit.

SERVANT.

A suit of livery.

PEGGY.

First Dress. White frock.—Second dress, petticoat and veil like Althea's.—Third dress. Blue coat, trowsers, and white waistcoat.

ALITHEA.

Blue satin dress, trimmed with white lace.

LUCY.

Coloured gown, and white apron.

Persons Represented.

As Originally acted. Drury Lane, 799.

| | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>Moody</i> | Mr. Hart. | Mr. Wroughton. |
| <i>Harcourt</i> | Mr. Kynaston. | Mr. Barrymore. |
| <i>Sparkish</i> | Mr. Haynes. | Mr. Dodd. |
| <i>Belville</i> | Mr. Lydal. | Mr. Bannister. |
| <i>William</i> | | Mr. Spencer. |
| <i>Countryman</i> | | Mr. Jones. |
| <i>John</i> | | Mr. Alfred. |
| <i>Miss Peggy</i> | Mrs. Bowtell. | Mrs. Jordan. |
| <i>Althea</i> | Mrs. James. | Mrs. Ward. |
| <i>Lucy</i> | Mrs. Cory. | Mrs. Wilson. |



Drury Lane. Covent Garden.

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <i>Moody</i> | Mr. Gattie. | Mr. Fawcett. |
| <i>Harcourt</i> | Mr. Wallack. | Mr. Barrymore. |
| <i>Sparkish</i> | Mr. Penley. | Mr. Farley. |
| <i>Belville</i> | Mr. Barnard. | Mr. Hamerton. |
| <i>William</i> | Mr. Maddocks. | Mr. Menage. |
| <i>Countryman</i> | Mr. Minton. | Mr. Howell. |
| <i>John</i> | Mr. Coveney. | Mr. W. Chapman. |
| <i>Miss Peggy</i> | Mrs. Mardyn. | Mrs. Alsop. |
| <i>Althea</i> | Mrs. Orger. | Miss Matthews. |
| <i>Lucy</i> | Miss Tidswell. | Mrs. Gibbs. |

SCENE—London.



THE COUNTRY GIRL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Harcourt's Lodgings.*

HARCOURT, L.H. and BELVILLE, R.H. *discovered sitting.*

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! and so you are in love, nephew ; not reasonably and gallantly, as a young gentleman ought, but sighingly, miserably so ; not content to be ankle-deep, you have sous'd over head and ears—ha, Dick ?

Bel. I am pretty much in that condition, indeed, uncle. (*Sighs.*)

Har. Nay, never blush at it : when I was of your age I was asham'd too ; but three years at college, and half a one at Paris, methinks should have cured you of that unfashionable weakness—modesty.

Bel. Could I have released myself from that, I had perhaps been at this instant happy in the possession of what I must despair now ever to obtain—Heigho !

Har. Ha, ha, ha ! very foolish indeed.

Bel. Don't laugh at me, uncle ; I am foolish, I know ; but, like other fools, I deserve to be pitied.

Har. Pr'ythee don't talk of pity; how can I help you? For this country girl of yours is certainly married.

Bel. No, no—I won't believe it; she is not married, nor she shan't be, if I can help it.

Har. Well said, modesty; with such a spirit you can help yourself, Dick, without my assistance.

Bel. But you must encourage and advise me too, or I shall never make any thing of it.

Har. Provided the girl is not married; for I never encourage young men to covet their neighbours' wives.

Bel. My heart assures me, that she is not married.

Har. O, to be sure, your heart is much to be relied upon; but to convince you that I have a fellow-feeling of your distress, and that I am as nearly allied to you in misfortunes as in relationship, you must know——

Bel. What, uncle? You alarm me!

Har. That I am in love too.

Bel. Indeed!

Har. Miserably in love.

Bel. That's charming.

Har. And my mistress is just going to be married to another.

Bel. Better and better.

Har. I knew my fellow-sufferings would please you; but now prepare for the wonderful wonder-of-wonders!

Bel. Well!

Har. My mistress is in the same house with yours.

Bel. What, are you in love with Peggy too?

(Rising from his Chair.)

Har. Well said, jealousy. No, no, set your heart at rest; your Peggy is too young, and too simple for me. I must have one a little more knowing, a little better bred, just old enough to see the difference between me and a coxcomb, spirit enough to break from a brother's engagements, and choose for herself.

Bel. You don't mean Alithea, who is to be married to Mr. Sparkish?

Isn't I be in love with a lady that is going to another, as well as you, sir?

Bel. But Sparkish is your friend ?

Har. Pr'ythee don't call him my friend ; he can be nobody's friend, not even his own.—He would thrust himself into my acquaintance, would introduce me to his mistress, though I have told him again and again that I was in love with her ; which, instead of ridding me of him, has made him only ten times more troublesome, and me really in love. He should suffer for his self-sufficiency.

Bel. 'Tis a conceited puppy!—And what success with the lady ?

Har. No great hopes ; and yet if I could defer the marriage a few days, I should not despair ; her honour, I am confident, is her only attachment to my rival : she can't like Sparkish ; and if I can work upon his credulity, a credulity which even popery would be ashamed of, I may yet have the chance of throwing sixes upon the dice to save me.

Bel. Nothing can save me.

Har. No, not if you whine and sigh, when you should be exerting every thing that is man about you. I have sent Sparkish, who is admitted at all hours in the house, to know how the land lies for you, and if she is not married already.

Bel. How cruel you are—you raise me up with one hand, and then knock me down with the other.

Har. Well, well, she shan't be married. (*Knocking at the Door, L.H.*) This is Sparkish, I suppose ; dont drop the least hint of your passion to him ; if you do, you may as well advertise it in the public papers.

Bel. I'll be careful.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. An odd sort of a person, from the country, I believe, who calls himself Moody, wants to see you, sir ; but as I did not know him, I said you were not at home, but would return directly ; “ And so will I too,” said he, very shortly and surlily ! and away he went mumbling to himself.

Har. Very well, Will ; I'll see him when he comes.
[*Exit, Servant, L.H.D.*] Moody call to see me !—He has something more in his head than making me a visit ; 'tis to complain of you, I suppose.

Bel. How can he know me ?

Har. We must suppose the worst, and be prepared for him ; tell me all you know of this ward of his, this Peggy—Peggy what's her name ?

Bel. Thrift, Thrift, uncle.

Har. Ay, ay, sir Thomas Thrift's daughter, of Hampshire ; and left very young, under the guardianship of my old companion and acquaintance, Jack Moody.

Bel. Your companion !—he's old enough to be your father.

Har. Thank you, nephew—he has greatly the advantage of me in years, as well as wisdom. When I first launched from the university, into this ocean of London, he was the greatest rake in it ; I knew him well for near two years, but all of a sudden he took a freak (a very prudent one) of retiring wholly into the country.

Bel. There he gain'd such an ascendancy over the odd disposition of his neighbour, sir Thomas, that he left him sole guardian to his daughter ; who forfeits half her fortune, if she does not marry with his consent—there's the devil, uncle.

Har. And are you so young, so foolish, and so much in love that you would take her with half her value ? Ha, nephew ?

Bel. I'll take her with any thing—with nothing.

Har. What ! such an unaccomplish'd, awkward, silly creature ? He has scarce taught her to write ; she has seen nobody to converse with, but the country people about 'em ; so she can do nothing but dangle her arms, look gawky ; turn her toes in, and talk broad Hampshire.

Bel. Don't abuse her sweet simplicity ; had you but heard her talk, as I have done, from the garden-wall in the country, by moon-light——

Har. Romeo and Juliet, I protest, ha, ha, ha !
“ Arise fair sun, and kill the envious—” ha, ha, ha !
How often have you seen this fair Capulet ?

Bel. I saw her three times in the country, and spoke to her twice ; I have leap’d an orchard wall, like Romeo, to come at her ; played the balcony scene, from an old summer-house in the garden ; and if I lose her, I will find out an apothecary, and play the tomb scene too.

Har. Well said, Dick !—this spirit must produce something ; but has the old dragon ever caught you sighing at her ?

Bel. Never in the country ; he saw me yesterday kissing my hand to her, from the new tavern window that looks upon the back of his house, and immediately drove her from it, and fastened up the window-shutters.

Spark. (*Without, L.H.*) Very well, Will, I’ll go up to ’em.

Har. I hear Sparkish coming up ; take care of what I told you ; not a word of Peggy ; hear his intelligence, and make use of it, without seeming to mind it.

Bel. Mum, mum, uncle.

Enter SPARKISH, L.H.D.

Spark. O, my dear Harcourt, I shall die with laughing ; I have such news for thee—ha, ha, ha !—What, your nephew too, and a little dumpish, or so ; you have been giving him a lecture upon economy, I suppose—you, who never had any, can best describe the evils that arise from the want of it. I never mind my own affairs, not I—“ The gods take care of Cato.”—(*Crosses to Centre.*)—I hear, Mr. Belville, you have got a pretty snug house, with a bow-window that looks into the Park, and a back-door that goes out into it. Very convenient, and well-imagined—no young handsome fellow should be without one—you may be always ready there, like a spider in his web, to seize upon stray’d women of quality.

Har. As you used to do—you vain fellow you; pr'ythee don't teach my nephew your abandoned tricks; he is a modest young man, and you must not spoil him.

Spark. May be so, but his modesty has done some mischief at our house—my surly, jealous brother-in-law saw that modest young gentleman casting a wishful eye at his forbidden fruit, from the new tavern window.

Bel. You mistake the person, Mr. Sparkish; I don't know what young lady you mean.

Har. Explain yourself, Sparkish, you must mistake; Dick has never seen the girl.

Spark. I don't say he has; I only tell you what Moody says. Besides, he went to the tavern himself, and enquired of the waiter who dined in the back room, No. 4; and they told him it was Mr. Belville, your nephew; that's all I know of the matter, or desire to know of it, faith.

Har. He kiss'd his hand, indeed, to your lady, Alithea, and is more in love with her than you are, and very near as much as I am; so look about you, such a youth may be dangerous.

Spark. The more danger the more honour: I defy you both—win her and wear her if you can—Dolus an virtus in love as well as in war—though you must be expeditious, faith; for I believe, if I don't change my mind, I shall marry her to-morrow, or the day after.—Have you no honest clergyman, Harcourt, no fellow-collegian to recommend me, to do the business?

Har. Nothing ever, sure, was so lucky. (*Aside.*) Why, faith, I have, Sparkish; my brother, a twin-brother, Ned Harcourt, will be in town to-day, and proud to attend your commands.—I am a very generous rival, you see, to lend you my brother to marry the woman I love!

Spark. And so am I too, to let your brother come so near us—(*Crosses to R.H.*)—but Ned shall be the man; poor Alithea grows impatient; I can't put off the evil day any longer. I fancy the brute, her bro-

ther, has a mind to marry his country idiot at the same time.

Bel. How, country idiot, sir?

Har. Hold your tongue. (*Apart to Belville.*) I thought he had been married already.

Spark. No, no, he's not married, that's the joke of it.

Bel. No, no, he is not married.

Har. Hold your tongue— (*Elbowing Belville.*)

Spark. Not he—I have the finest story to tell you— (*Crosses to Centre.*)—by-the-by, he intends calling upon you, for he asked me where you lived, to complain of modesty there. He picked up an old raking acquaintance of his as we came along together, Will Frankly, who saw him with his girl, skulking and muffled up, at the play last night; he plagu'd him much about matrimony, and his being ashamed to show himself: swore he was in love with his wife, and intended to cuckold him. “Do you?” cried Moody, folding his arms, and scowling with his eyes thus—“You must have more wit than you used to have; besides, if you have as much as you think you have, I shall be out of your reach, and this profligate metropolis, in less than a week.”—Moody would fain have got rid of him, but the other held him by the sleeve, so I left 'em; rejoiced most luxuriously to see the poor devil tormented.

Bel. I thought you said, just now, that he was not married; is not that a contradiction, sir?

(*Harcourt still makes signs to Belville.*)

Spark. Why, it is a kind of one; but considering your modesty, and the ignorance of the young lady, you are pretty tolerably inquisitive, methinks; ha, Harcourt! ha, ha, ha!

Har. Pooh, pooh! don't talk to that boy, tell me all you know.

Spark. You must know, my booby of a brother-in-law hath brought up this ward of his (a good fortune let me tell you), as he coops up and fattens his chickens for his own eating; he is plaguy jealous of,

her, and was very sorry that he could not marry her in the country, without coming up to town; which he could not do on account of some writings or other; so what does my gentleman? He persuades the poor silly girl, by breaking a sixpence, or some nonsense or another, that they are to all intents married in heaven; but that the laws require the signing of articles, and the church service to complete their union: so he has made her call him husband, and bud, which she constantly does; and he calls her wife, and gives out she is married, that she may not look after younger fellows, nor younger fellows after her, egad; ha, ha, ha! and all won't do. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Bel. Thank you, sir. What heavenly news, uncle! (*Aside.*)

Har. What an idiot you are, nephew! (*Apart.*) And so then you make but one trouble of it, and are both to be tack'd together the same day?

Spark. No, no, he can't be married this week; he damns the lawyers for keeping him in town;—besides, I am out of favour; and he is continually snarling at me, and abusing me for not being jealous. (*Knocking at the Door.*) There he is—I must not be seen with you, for he'll suspect something; I'll go with your nephew to his house, and we'll wait for you, and make a visit to my wife that is to be, and perhaps we shall show young modesty here a sight of Peggy too.

Enter a Servant, L.H.D.

Serv. Sir, here's the strange odd sort of a gentleman come again, and I have shown him into the fore-parlour.

Spark. That must be Moody! Well said, Will; an odd sort of a strange gentleman indeed; we'll step into the next room till he comes into this, and then you may have him all to yourself—much good may he

THE COUNTRY GIRL.

do you. (*Going, R.H.*) Remember that he is married, he'll suspect me of betraying him.

[*Exeunt Sparkish and Belville, R.H.*]

Har. Show him up, Will. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*]
Now must I prepare myself to see a very strange though a very natural metamorphosis; a once high spirited, handsome, well-dress'd, raking prodigal of the town, sunk into a surly, suspicious, economical country sloven.

Enter MOODY, L.H.D.

Moody. Mr. Harcourt, your humble servant: have you forgot me?

Har. What, my old friend, Jack Moody! by thy long absence from the town, the grumness of thy countenance, and the slovenliness of thy habit, I should give thee joy—you are certainly married.

Moody. My long stay in the country will excuse my dress, and I have a suit at law that brings me up to town, and puts me out of humour; besides, I must give Sparkish ten thousand pounds to-morrow to take my sister off my hands.

Har. Your sister is very much obliged to you: being so much older than her, you have taken upon you the authority of a father, and have engaged her to a coxcomb.

Moody. I have, and to oblige her: nothing but coxcombs or debauchees are the favourites now-a-days; and a coxcomb is rather the more innocent animal of the two.

Har. She has sense and taste, and can't like him; so you must answer for the consequences.

Moody. When she is out of my hands, her husband must look to the consequences. He's a fashionable fool, and will cut his horns kindly.

Har. And what is to secure your worship from consequences?—I did not expect marriage from such a rake—one that knew the town so well; fie, fie, Jack.

Moody. I'll tell you my security—I have married no London wife.

Har. That's all one; that grave circumspection in marrying a country wife, is like refusing a deceitful, pamper'd, Smithfield jade, to go and be cheated by a friend in the country.

Moody. I wish the devil had both him and his simile.
(*Aside.*)

Har. Well, never grumble about it, what's done can't be undone. Is your wife handsome and young?

Moody. She has little beauty but her youth, nothing to brag of but her health, and no attraction but her modesty—wholesome, homely, and housewifely—that's all.

Har. You talk as like a grazier as you look, Jack.—Why did you not bring her to town before, to be taught some thing?

Moody. Which something I might repent as long as I live,

Har. But pr'ythee, why wouldst thou marry her, if she be ugly, ill-bred, and silly? She must be rich then?

Moody. As rich as if she had the wealth of the mogul. She'll not ruin her husband, like a London baggage, with a million of vices she never heard of: then, because she's ugly, she's the likelier to be my own; and being ill-bred, she'll hate conversation; and since silly and innocent, will not know the difference between me and you; that is, between a man of thirty, and one of forty.

Har. Fifty to my knowledge. (*Moody turns off, and grumbles.*)—But see how you and I differ, Jack—wit to me is more necessary than beauty; I think no young woman ugly that has it, and no handsome woman agreeable without it.

Moody. 'Tis my maxim—He's a fool that marries; but he's a greater that does not marry a fool.—I know the town, Mr. Harcourt; and my wife shall be virtuous in spite of you or your nephew.

Har. My nephew!—poor sheepish lad. he runs

away from every woman he sees: he saw your sister Alithea at the opera, and was much smitten with her; he always toasts her, and hates the very name of Sparkish. I'll bring him to your house, and you shall see what a formidable Tarquin he is.

Moody. I have no curiosity, so give yourself no trouble.—You have heard of a wolf in sheep's clothing; and I have seen your innocent nephew kissing his hands at my windows.

Har. At your sister, I suppose; not at her unless he was tipsy. How can you, Jack, be so outrageously suspicious? Sparkish has promised to introduce him to his mistress.

Moody. Sparkish is a fool, and may be what I'll take care not to be.—I confess my visit to you, Mr. Harcourt, was partly for old acquaintance sake, but chiefly to desire your nephew to confine his gallantries to the tavern, and not send 'em in looks, signs, or tokens, on the other side of the way. I keep no brothel; so pray tell your nephew. (*Going, L.H.*)

Har. Nay, pr'ythee, Jack, leave me in better humour. Well, I'll tell him; ha, ha, ha! Poor Dick, how he'll stare. This will give him a reputation, and the girls won't laugh at him any longer. Shall we dine together at the tavern, and send for my nephew to chide him for his gallantry? Ha, ha, ha! we shall have fine sport.

Moody. I am not to be laugh'd out of my senses, Mr. Harcourt.—I was once a modest young gentleman myself; and I never have been half so mischievous before or since, as I was in that state of innocence.—And so, old friend, make no ceremony with me; I have much business, and you have much pleasure, and therefore, as I hate forms, I will excuse your returning my visit, or sending your nephew to satisfy me of his modesty—and so your servant. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Har. Ha, ha, ha! poor Jack! what a life of suspicion does he lead! I pity the poor fellow, though he ought and will suffer for his folly—Folly!—'tis treason, murder, sacrilege! When persons of a certain

age will indulge their false, ungenerous appetites, at the expense of a young creature's happiness, dame Nature will revenge herself upon them, for thwarting her most heavenly will and pleasure. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Moody's House.*

Enter PEGGY and ALITHEA, R.H.

Peggy. Pray, sister, where are the best fields and woods to walk in in London?

Ali. A pretty question! Why, sister, Vauxhall, Kensington Gardens, and St. James's Park, are the most frequented.

Peggy. Pray, sister, tell me why my bud looks so grum here in town, and keeps me up so close, and won't let me go a walking, nor let me wear my best gown yesterday?

Ali. O, he's jealous, sister!

Peggy. Jealous! what's that?

Ali. He's afraid you should love another man.

Peggy. How should he be afraid of my loving another man, when he will not let me see any but himself?

Ali. Did he not carry you yesterday to the play?

Peggy. Ay; but we sat amongst ugly people: he would not let me come near the gentry, who sat under us, so that I could not see 'em. He told me none but naughty women sat there; but I would have ventured for all that.

Ali. But how did you like the play?

Peggy. Indeed I was weary of the play; but I liked hugely the actors; they are the goodliest, properest men, sister.

Ali. O, but you must not like the actors, sister.

Peggy. Ay, how should I help it, sister? Pray,

sister, when my guardian comes in, will you ask leave for me to go a walking ?

Ali. A walking ! ha, ha, ha ! Lord, a country gentlewoman's pleasure is the drudgery of a foot-post, and she requires as much airing as her husband's horses. (*Aside.*) But here comes my brother ; I'll ask him, though I'm sure he'll not grant it.

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Peggy. O my dear, dear bud, welcome home ; why dost thou look so fropish ? Who has nager'd thee ?

Moody. You're a fool.

(*Peggy goes aside and cries.*)

Ali. Faith, and so she is for crying for no fault ; poor tender creature !

Moody. What, would you have her as impudent as yourself ; as arrant a girlflirt, a gadder, a magpie ; and to say all, a mere notorious town woman !

Ali. Brother, you are my only censurèr ; and the honour of your family will sooner suffer in your wife that is to be, than in me, though I take the innocent liberty of the town !

Moody. Hark you, mistress ! do not talk so before my wife : the innocent liberty of the town !

Ali. Pray, what ill people frequent my lodgings ? I keep no company with any woman of scandalous reputation.

Moody. No, you keep the men of scandalous reputation company.

Ali. Would you not have me civil ? Answer them at public places ? Walk with them when they join me in the Park, Kensington Gardens, or Vauxhall ?

Moody. Hold, hold ; do not teach my wife where the men are to be found ; I believe she's the worse for your town documents already. I bid you keep her in ignorance as I do.

Peggy. Indeed, be not angry with her, bud, she will tell me nothing of the town, though I ask her a thousand times a day.

Moody. Then you are very inquisitive to know, I find.

Peggy. Not I indeed, dear; I hate London: our place-house in the country is worth a thousand of't; would I were there again!

Moody. So you shall I warrant. But were you not talking of plays and players when I came in? You are her encourager in such discourses. (*To Alithea.*)

Peggy. No, indeed dear; she chid me just now for liking the player-men.

Moody. Nay, if she is so innocent as to own to me her liking them, there's no harm in't. (*Aside.*) Come, my poor rogue, but thou likest none better than me?

Peggy. Yes, indeed, but I do: the player men are finer folks.

Moody. But you love none better than me?

Peggy. You are my own dear bud, and I know you: I hate strangers.

Moody. Ay, my dear, you must love me only; and not be like the naughty town women, who only hate their husbands, and love every man else; love plays, visits, fine coaches, fine clothes, fiddies, balls, treats, and so lead a wicked town life.

Peggy. Nay, if to enjoy all these things be a town life, London is not so bad a place dear.

Moody. How! if you love me you must hate London.

Peggy. But, bud, do the town women love the player-men too?

Moody. Ay I warrant you.

Peggy. Ay, I warrant you.

Moody. Why, you do not I hope?

Peggy. No, no, bud; but why have we no player-men in the country?

Moody. Ha! Mrs. Minx, ask me no more to go to a play.

Peggy. Nay, why, love? I did not care for going; but when you forbid me, you make me as it were desire it. Pray let me go to a play, dear?

Moody. Hold your peace ; I won't,

Peggy. Why, love ?

Moody. Why, I'll tell you.

Peggy. Pray, why, dear ?

Moody. First, you like the actors : and the gallants may like you.

Peggy. What, a homely country girl ? No, bud, nobody will like me.

Moody. I tell you yes, they may.

Peggy. No, no, you jest—I won't believe you ; I will go.

Moody. I tell you then, that one of the most raking fellows in town, who saw you there, told me he was in love with you.

Peggy. Indeed : who, who, pray, who was't ?

Moody. I've gone too far, and slipt before I was aware. How overjoy'd she is ! (*Aside.*)

Peggy. Was it any Hampshire gallant : any of our neighbours ?—'Promise you I am beholden to him.

Moody. I promise you, you lie ; for he would but ruin you, as he has done hundreds.

Peggy. Ay, but if he loves me, why should he ruin me ? Answer me to that. Methinks he should not ; I would do him no harm.

Ali. Ha, ha, ha !

Moody. 'Tis very well ; but I'll keep him from doing you any harm, or me either. But here comes company ; get you in, get you in.

Peggy. But pray, husband is he a pretty gentleman that loves me ?

Moody. In baggage, in. (*Thrusts her in, R.H.D. and shuts the Door.*) What, all the libertines of the town brought to my lodging by this easy coxcomb ! 'Sdeath, I'll not suffer it.

Enter SPARKISH, HARCOURT, and BELVILLE, L.H.

Spark. Here, Belville, do you approve my choice ?

Dear little rogue, I told you I'd bring you acquainted with all my friends, the wits. *(To Alithea.)*

Moody. Ay, they shall know her as well as you yourself will, I warrant you. *(Aside.)*

Spark. This is one of those, my pretty rogue, that are to dance at your wedding to-morrow; and one you must make welcome; for he's modest. *(Belville crosses and salutes Alithea;—Har. does the same.)*

Harcourt makes himself welcome, and has not the same foible, though of the same family.

Har. You are too obliging, Sparkish.

(Alithea and Sparkish retire up the stage.)

Moody. And so he is indeed. The fop's horns will as naturally sprout upon his brows as mushrooms upon dunghills. *(Aside.)*

Har. This, Mr. Moody, is my nephew you mentioned to me. I would bring him with me; for a sight of him will be sufficient, without poppy or mandragora to restore you to your rest.

(Joins Alithea and Sparkish.)

Bel. I am sorry, sir, that any mistake or imprudence of mine should have given you any uneasiness: it was not so intended, I assure you, sir.

Moody. It may be so, sir, but not the less criminal for that.—My wife, sir, must not be smirk'd and nodded at from tavern windows. I am a good shot, young gentleman, and don't suffer magpies to come near my cherries.

Bel. Was it your wife, sir?

Moody. What's that to you, sir? Suppose it were my grandmother?

Bel. I would not dare to offend her.—Permit me to say a word in private to you.

[Exeunt Moody and Bel. L.H.]

Spark. Now old surly is gone, tell me, Harcourt, if thou likest her as well as ever.—*(Crosses to centre.)* My dear, don't look down; I should hate to have a wife of mine out of countenance at any thing.

Ali. (R.H.) For shame, Mr. Sparkish!

Spark. Tell me, I say, Harcourt, how dost like her? Thou hast stared upon her enough to resolve me.

Har. (L.H.) So infinitely well, that I could wish I had a mistress too, that might differ from her in nothing but her love and engagement to you.

Ali. Sir, Mr. Sparkish has often told me that his acquaintance were all wits and railers; and now I find it.

Spark. No, by the universe, madam, he does not rally now; you may believe him. I do assure you he is the honestest, worthiest, truest-hearted gentleman; a man of such perfect honour, he would say nothing to a lady he does not mean.

Har. Sir, you are so beyond expectation obliging that—

Spark. Nay, 'egad, I am sure you do admire her extremely; I see it in your eyes.—He does admire you, madam; he has told me so a thousand and a thousand times; have you not, Harcourt? You do admire her, by the world, you do—don't you?

Har. Yes, above the world, or the most glorious part of it, her whole sex; and till now I never thought I should have envied you or any man about to marry; but you have the best excuse to marry I every knew.

Ali. Nay, now, sir, I am satisfied you are of the society of the wits and railers, since you cannot spare your friend, even when he is most civil to you; but the surest sign is, you are an enemy to marriage, the common butt of every railer.

Har. Truly, madam, I was never any enemy to marriage till now, because marriage was never an enemy to me before.

Ali. But why, sir, is marriage an enemy to you now? Because it robs you of your friend here? For you look upon a friend married as one gone into a monastery, that is dead to the world.

Har. 'Tis indeed because you marry him: I see, madam, you can guess my meaning.—I do confess heartily and openly, I wish it were in my power to break the match; by heavens I would.

Spark. Poor Frank!

Ali. Would you be so unkind to me?

Har. No, no, 'tis not because I would be unkind to you.

Spark. Poor Frank! No, 'egad, 'tis only his kindness to me.

Ali. Great kindness to you indeed!—Insensible! Let a man make love to his mistress to his face. (*Aside.*)

Spark. Come, dear Frank, for all my wife there, that shall be, thou shall enjoy my company sometimes, dear rogue.—By my honour, we men of wit condole for our deceased brother in marriage, as much as for one dead in earnest. I think that was prettily said of me, ha, Harcourt. Pr'ythee, Frank, dost think my wife that shall be, there, a fine person?

Har. I could gaze upon her till I became as blind as you are.

Spark. How as I am? How?

Har. Because you are a lover; and true lovers are blind.

Spark. True, true; but by the world she has wit too, as well as beauty. Go, go, with her into a corner, and try if she has wit; (*He puts Har. over to Ali.*) talk to her any thing, she's bashful before me—take her into a corner.

(*Har. courts Alithea aside, R.H.*)

Re-enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. How, sir! If you are not concerned for the honour of a wife, I am for that of a sister.—Be a pander to your own wife, bring men to her, let 'em make love before your face, thrust them into a corner together, then leave 'em in private! Is this your town wit and conduct?

Spark. Ha, ha, ha! a silly, wise rogue would make one laugh more than a stark fool, ha, ha, ha! I shall burst. Nay, you shall not disturb 'em; I'll vex thee by the world. What have you done with Belville?

(*Struggles with Moody to keep him from Harcourt and Alithea.*)

Moody. Shown him the way out of my house, as you should to that gentleman.

Spark. Nay, but pr'ythee let me reason with thee.

(*Talks apart with Moody, L.H.*)

Ali. The writings are drawn, sir, settlements made: 'tis too late sir, and past all revocation.

Har. Then so is my death.

Ali. I would not be unjust to him.

Har. Then why to me so ?

Ali. I have no obligations to you.

Har. My love.

Ali. I had his before.

Har. You never had it: he wants you see, jealousy, the only infalliable sign of it.

Ali. Love proceeds from esteem. he cannot distrust my virtue; besides, he loves me, or he would not marry me.

Har. Marrying you is no more a sign of his love, than bribing your woman, that he may marry you is a sign of his generosity. But if you take marriage for a sign of love, take it from me immediately.

Ali. No, now you have put a scruple in my head.—But in short, sir, to end our dispute, I must marry him; my reputation would suffer in the world else.

Har. No: if you do marry him, with your pardon, madam, your reputation must suffer in the world.

Ali. Nay, now you are rude, sir.—Mr. Sparkish, pray come hither, your friend here is very troublesome and very loving.

Har. Hold, hold. (*Aside to Alithea.*)

Moody. D'ye hear that senseless puppy ?

Spark. Why, d'ye think I'll seem jealous, like a country bumpkin ?

Moody. No, rather be dishonour'd, like a credulous driveller.

(*They retire up the stage, L.H.*)

Har. Madam, you would not have been so little generous as to have told him ?

Ali. Yes, since you could be so little generous as to wrong him.

Har. Wrong him ! no man can do it; he's beneath

an injury : a bubble, a coward, a senseless idiot ; a wretch so contemptible to all the world but you, that—

Ali. Hold, do not rail at him ; for since he is like to be my husband, I am resolved to like him : nay I think I am obliged to tell him you are not his friend.—Mr. Sparkish ! Mr. Sparkish ! *(Crosses to him.)*

Spark. What, what ?—Now, dear rogue, has she not wit ?

Har. Not so much as I thought, and hoped she had. *(Surlily.)*

Ali. Mr. Sparkish, do you bring people to rail at you ?

Har. Madam !

Spark. How ? No ; but if he does rail at me, 'tis but in jest, I warrant : what we wits do for one another, and never take any notice of it.

Ali. He spoke so scurrilously of you. I had no patience to hear him.

Moody. And he was in the right on't.

Ali. Besides, he has been making love to me.

Moody. And I told the fool so.

Har. True, damn'd, tell tale woman. *(Aside.)*

Spark. Pshaw ! to show his parts ; we wits rail and make love often. but to show our parts : as we have no affections, so we have no malice ? We—

Moody. Did you ever hear such an ass ?

Ali. He said you were a wretch below an injury.

Spark. Pshaw !

Ali. A common bubble.

Spark. Pshaw !

Ali. A coward.

Spark. Pshaw ! pshaw !

Ali. A senseless, drivelling idiot.

Moody. True, true, true ; all true.

Spark. How ! did he disparage my parts ? Nay then, my honour's concerned. I can't put up that. Brother help me to kill him. *(Offers to draw.)*

Ali. Hold ! hold !

Moody. If Harcourt would but kill Sparkish, and un away with my sister, I should be rid of three lagues at once. *(Aside, L.H.)*

Ali. Indeed, to tell the truth, the gentleman said, after all, that what he spoke was but out of friendship to you.

Spark. How ! say I am a fool, that is no wit, out of friendship to me ?

Ali. Yes, to try whether I was concerned enough for you ; and made love to me only to be satisfied of my virtue, for your sake.

Har. Kind, however ! (*Aside.*)

Spark. Nay, if it were so, my dear rogue, I ask thee pardon ; but why would not you tell me so, 'faith ?

Har. Because I did not think on't, 'faith.

Spark. Come, Belville is gone away : Harcourt, let's be gone to the new play ; come, madam.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Ali. I will not go, if you intend to leave me alone in the box, and run all about the house, as you used to do.

Spark. Pshaw ! I'll leave Harcourt with you in the box, to entertain you, and that's as good. If I sat in the box, I should be thought no critic. I must run about, my dear, and abuse the author. Come, away, Harcourt, lead her down. B'ye, brother.

[*Exeunt Harcourt, Sparkish, and Alithea, L.H.*]

Moody. B'ye, driveller. Well, go thy ways, for the flower of the true town fops ; such as spend their estates before they come to 'em, and are cuckolds before they're married. But let me go look to my freehold.

Enter a Countryman, L.H.

Country. Master, your worship's servant. Here is the lawyer, counsellor gentleman, with a green bag full of papers, come again, and would be glad to speak to you.

Moody. Nowhere's some other damn'd impediment, which the law has thrown in our way. I shall never marry the girl, nor get clear of the smoke and wickedness of this cursed town. (*Aside.*) Where is he

Country. He's below in a coach, with three other lawyers, counsellor gentlemen. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber.*

Enter PEGGY and LUCY, R.H.

Lucy. What ails you, miss Peggy? You are grown quite melancholy.

Peggy. Would it not make any one melancholy to see your mistress Alithea go every day fluttering about abroad to plays and assemblies, and I know not what, whilst I must stay at home, like a poor, lonely, sullen bird in a cage?

Lucy. Dear miss Peggy, I thought you chose to be confined: I imagined that you had been bred so young to the cage, that you had no pleasure in flying about, and hopping in the open air, as other young ladies, who go a little wild about this town.

Peggy. Nay, I confess I was quiet enough, till somebody told me what pure lives the London ladies lead, with their dancing meetings, and junketings, and dress'd every day in their best gowns; and I warrant you play at nine-pins every day in the week, so they do.

Lucy. To be sure, miss, you will lead a better life when join'd in holy wedlock with your sweet-temper'd guardian, the cheerful Mr. Moody.

Peggy. I can't lead a worse, that's one good thing; but I must make the best of a bad market, for I can't marry nobody else.

Lucy. How so, miss? That's very strange.

Peggy. Why we have a contraction to one another; we are as good as married, you know.

Lucy. I know it! Heaven forbid, miss.

Peggy. Heighó!

Lucy. Don't sigh, miss Peggy; if that young gentleman, who was here just now, would take pity on me, throw such a contract as yours behind the fire.

Peggy. Lord bless us, how you talk!

Lucy. Young Mr. Belville would make you talk otherwise, if you knew him.

Peggy. Mr. Belville!—Where is he?—When did you see him?—You have undone me, Lucy; where was he? Did he say any thing?

Lucy. Say any thing!—very little indeed; he's quite distracted, poor young creature! He was talking with your guardian just now.

Peggy. The deuce he was!—but where was it, and when was it?

Lucy. In this house, five minutes ago, when your guardian turn'd you into your chamber, for fear of your being seen.

Peggy. I knew something was the matter, I was in such a fluster. But what did he say to my bud?

Lucy. What do you call him bud for? Bud means husband, and he is not your husband yet, and I hope never will be; and if he was my husband I'd bud him, a surly, unreasonable beast.

Peggy. I'd call him any names, to keep him in good humour; if he'd let me marry any body else (which I can't do), I'd call him husband as long as he lived.—But what said Mr. Belville to him?

Lucy. I don't know what he said to him, but I'll tell you what he said to me, with a sigh, and his hand upon his breast, as he went out of the door—"If you ever were in love, young gentlewoman (meaning me), and can pity a most faithful lover, tell the dear object of my affections——"

Peggy. Meaning me, Lucy?

Lucy. Yes, you, to be sure. "Tell the dear object of my affections, I live but upon the hopes that she is not married; and when those hopes leave me, she knows the rest;" then he cast up his eyes, thus—gnash'd his teeth—struck his forehead—would have spoke again, but he could not—fetch'd a deep sigh, and vanish'd.

Peggy. That is really very fine; I am sure it makes my heart sink within me, and brings tears into my eyes!

O, he's a charming sweet—But hush, hush, I hear my husband.

Lucy. Don't call him husband. Go into the Park this evening, if you can.

Peggy. Mum, mum.

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. Come, what's here to do ; you are putting the town pleasures in her head, and setting her a longing.

Lucy. Yes, after nine-pins ; you suffer none to give her those longings but yourself.

Moody. Come, Mrs. Flippant, good precepts are lost when bad examples are still before us : the liberty your mistress takes abroad makes her hanker after it, and out of humour at home. Poor wretch ! she desired not to come to London ; I would bring her.

Lucy. O yes, you surfeit her with pleasures.

Moody. She has been this fortnight in town, and never desired, till this afternoon, to go abroad.

Lucy. Was she not at the play yesterday ?

Moody. Yes, but she never ask'd me ; I was myself the cause of her going.

Lucy. Then if she ask you again, you are the cause of her asking, and not my mistress.

Moody. Well, next week I shall be rid of you all, rid of this town, and my dreadful apprehensions. Come, be not melancholy, for thou shalt go into the country very soon, dearest.

Peggy. Pish ! what d'ye tell me of the country for ?

Moody. How's this ? What, flout at the country ?

Peggy. Let me alone, I am not well.

Moody. O, if that be all—what ails my dearest ?

Peggy. Truly I don't know ; but I have not been well since you told me there was a gallant at the play in love with me.

Moody. Ha !

Lucy. That's my mistress too.

Moody. Nay, if you are not well, but are so concern'd because a raking fellow chanced to lie, and say he liked you, you'll make me sick too.

Peggy. Of what sickness?

Moody. O, of that which is worse than the plague; jealousy!

Peggy. Pish! you jeer: I'm sure there's no such disease in your receipt-book at home.

Moody. No, you never met with it, poor innocent.

Peggy. Well, but pray, bud, let's go to a play to-night.

Moody. No, no; no more plays. But why are you so eager to see a play?

Peggy. Faith, dear, not that I care one pin for their talk there; but I like to look upon the player-men, and would see, if I could, the gallant you say loves me; that's all, dear bud.

Moody. Is that all, dear bud?

Lucy. (*Aside.*) This proceeds from my mistress's example.

Peggy. Let's go abroad, however, dear bud, if we don't go to the play.

Moody. Come, have a little patience, and thou shalt go into the country next week.

Peggy. Therefore I would first see some sights to tell my neighbours of: nay, I will go abroad, that's once.

Moody. What, you have put this into her head?

(*To Lucy.*)

Lucy. Heaven defend me, what suspicions! somebody has put more things into your head than you ought to have.

Moody. Your tongue runs too glibly, madam; and you have lived too long with a London lady, to be a proper companion for innocence. I am not over-fond of you, mistress.

Lucy. There's no love lost between us.

Moody. You admitted those gentlemen into the house, when I said I would not be at home; and there was the young fellow too who behaved so indecent to my wife at the tavern window.

Lucy. Because you would not let him see your handsome wife out of your lodgings.

Peggy. Why, O Lord, did the gentleman come hither to see me indeed?

Moody. No, no. You are not the cause of that damn'd question too? *(To Lucy.)*

Peggy. Come, pray, bud, let's go abroad before 'tis late: for I will go, that's flat and plain—only into the Park.

Moody. So! the obstinacy already of the town wife; and I must, while she's here, humour her like one.—*(Aside.)* How shall we do, that she may not be seen or known?

Lucy. Muffle her up with a bonnet and cloak, and I'll go with her to avoid suspicion.

Moody. No, no, I am obliged to you for your kindness, but she shan't stir without me.

Lucy. What will you do then?

Peggy. What shall we go? I am sick with staying at home: if I don't walk in the Park, I'll do nothing that I'm bid for a week—I won't be mop'd.

Lucy. O she has a charming spirit! I could stand your friend now, and would, if you had ever a civil word to give me. *(To Moody.)*

Moody. I'll give thee a better thing, I'll give thee a guinea for thy good advice, if I like it; and I can have the best of the college for the same money.

Lucy. I despise a bribe: when I am your friend, it shall be without fee or reward.

Peggy. Don't be long then, for I will go out.

Lucy. The tailor brought home last night the clothes you intend for a present to your godson in the country.

Peggy. You must not tell that, Lucy.

Lucy. But I will, madam. When you were with your lawyers last night, miss Peggy, to divert me and herself, put 'em on, and they fitted her to a hair.

Moody. Thank you, thank you, Lucy, 'tis the luckiest thought! Go this moment, Peggy, into your chamber, and put 'em on again—and you shall walk with me

into the Park, as my godson. Well thought of, Lucy ; I shall love you for ever for this.

Peggy. And so shall I too, Lucy : I'll put 'em on directly. (*Going.*) I suppose, bud, I must keep on my petticoats for fear of showing my legs ?

Moody. No, no, you fool, never mind your legs.

[*Exeunt Peggy, R.H.D. Moody, L.H.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Park.*

Enter BELVILLE and HARCOURT, R.H.

Bel. And the moment Moody left me, I took an opportunity of conveying some tender sentiments through Lucy to miss Peggy ; and here I am, in expectation of seeing my country goddess.

Har. And so to blind Moody, and take him off the scent of your passion for this girl, and at the same time to give me an opportunity with Sparkish's mistress (and of which I have made the most), you hinted to him with a grave melancholy face that you were dying for his sister—Gad-a-mercy, nephew ! I will back thy modesty against any other in the three kingdoms : it will do, Dick.

Bel. What could I do, uncle ?—It was my last stake, and I play'd for a great deal.

Har. You mistake me, Dick : I don't say you could do better, I only can't account for your modesty's doing so much : you have done such wonders, that I, who am rather bold than sheepish, have not yet ceased wondering at you. But do you think that you imposed upon him ?

Bel. Faith, I can't say ; he said very little, grumbled much, shook his head, and showed me the door.—But what success have you had with Alithea ?

Har. Just enough to have a glimmering of hope, without having light enough to see an inch before my nose.—This day will produce something : Alithea is a woman of great honour, and will sacrifice her happiness to it, unless Sparkish's absurdity stands my friend, and does every thing that the fates ought to do for me.

Bel. Yonder comes the prince of coxcombs, and if your mistress and mine should, by chance, be tripping this way, this fellow will spoil sport : let us avoid him—you can't cheat him before his face.

Har. But I can though, thanks to my wit, and his want of it.

Bel. But you cannot come near his mistress but in his company.

Har. Still the better for me, nephew, for fools are most easily cheated, when they themselves are accessories ; and he is to be bubbled of his mistress, or of his money (the common mistress), by keeping him company.

Enter SPARKISH, R.H.

Spark. Who's that that is to be bubbled ? Faith, let me snack ; I han't met with a bubble since Christmas. 'Gad, I think bubbles like their brother woodcocks, go out with the cold weather.

Har. He did not hear all, I hope. (*Apart to Bel.*)

Spark. (*Crosses to Centre.*) Come you bubbling rogues, you, where do we sup ? O Harcourt, my mistress tells me you have made love, fierce love to her last night, all the play long ; ha, ha, ha !—but I—

Har. I make love to her ?

Spark. Nay, I forgive thee, and I know her ; but I am sure I know myself.

Bel. Do you, sir? Then you are the wisest man in the world, and I honour you as such. (*Bows.*)

Spark. O, your servant, sir: you are at your raillery, are you! You can't oblige me more; I'm your man: he'll meet with his match. Ha! Harcourt! did not you hear me laugh prodigiously at the play last night?

Har. Yes, and was very much disturb'd at it. You put the actors and audience into confusion, and all your friends out of countenance.

Spark. So much the better; I love confusion, and to see folks out of countenance; I was in tip-top spirits, faith, and said a thousand good things.

Bel. But I thought you had gone to plays to laugh at the poet's good things, and not at your own.

Spark. Your servant, sir; no, I thank you. 'Gad I go to a play as to a country treat: I carry my own wine to one, and my own wit to t'other, or else I'm sure I should not be merry at either; and the reason why we are so often louder than the players is, because we hate authors damnably.

Bel. But why should you hate the poor rogues? You have too much wit, and despise writing, I'm sure.

Spark. O yes, I despise writing; but women, women, that make men do all foolish things, make 'em write songs too. Every body does it; 'tis e'en as common with lovers, as playing with fans: and you can no more help rhyming to your Phillis, than drinking to your Phillis.

Har. But the poets damn'd your songs, did they?

Spark. Damn the poets: they turn'd them into burlesque as they call it: that burlesque is a hocus-pocus trick they have got, which, by the virtue of hiccus-docius, topsy-turvy, they make a clever witty thing absolute nonsense! Do you know, Harcourt, that they ridiculed my last song? "Twang, twang," the best I ever wrote.

Har. That may be, and be very easily ridiculed for all that.

Bel. Favour me with it, sir; I never heard it.

Spark. What, and have all the Park about us?

Har. Which you'll not dislike; and so, pr'ythee, begin.

Spark. I never am ask'd twice, and so have at you.

SONG.

*Tell me not of the roses and lilies
Which tinge the fair cheek of your Phillis;
Tell me not of the dimples and eyes,
For which silly Corydon dies.
Let all whining lovers go hang;
My heart would you hit,
Tip your arrow with wit,
And it comes to my heart with a twang, twang,
And it comes to my heart with a twang.*

(At the end of the Song Harcourt and Belville steal away L.H. U.E. from Sparkish, and leave him singing; he sinks his Voice by degrees at the surprise of their being gone.)

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE, L.H. U.E.

What the deuce did you go away for?

Har. Your mistress is coming.

Spark. The devil she is! O hide, hide me from her.
(Hides behind Harcourt.)

Har. She sees you.

Spark. But I will not see her; for I'm engaged, and at this instant.
(Looking at his Watch.)

Har. Pray first take me, and reconcile me to her.

Spark. Another time; faith, it is the lady, and one cannot make excuses to a woman.

Bel. You have need of'em I believe.

Spark. Pshaw, pr'ythee hide me.

Enter MOODY, PEGGY, in Boy's Clothes, and ALITHEA, L.H.

Har. Your servant, Mr. Moody.

Moody. Come along. (To *Peggy*.)

Peggy. Lau! what a sweet delightful place this is!

Moody. Come along, I say, don't stare about you so; you'll betray yourself.

[*Exit Moody, pulling Peggy, Alithea following, R.H.*

Har. He does not know us.

Bel. Or he won't know us. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Spark. So much the better.

[*Exit Belville after them, R.H.*

Har. Who is that pretty youth with him, Sparkish?

Spark. Some relation of *Peggy's*, I suppose: for he is something like her in face and gawkinsess.

Re-enter BELVILLE, R.H.

Bel. By all my hopes, uncle, *Peggy* in boy's clothes. I am all over agitation. (*Apart to Harcourt.*)

Har. Be quiet, or you'll spoil all. They return.—*Alithea* has seen you, *Sparkish*, and will be angry if you don't go to her: besides, I would fain be reconciled to her, which none but you can do, my dear friend.

Spark. Well, that's a better reason, dear friend: I would not go near her now for her's or my own sake; but I can deny you nothing: for though I have known thee a great while, never go, if I do not love thee as well as a new acquaintance.

Har. I am obliged to you, indeed, my dear friend: I would be well with her, only to be well with thee still; for these ties to wives usually dissolve all ties to friends.

Spark. But they shan't though. Come along.
(*They retire, L.H.*)

Re-enter MOODY, PEGGY, and ALITHEA, R.H.

Moody. Sister, if you will not go, we must leave you. (*To Alithea.*) The fool, her gallant, and she will muster up all the young saunterers of this place. What a swarm of cuckolds and cuckold-makers are here!

I begin to be uneasy. (*Aside.*) Come, let's be gone, Peggy.

Peggy. Don't you believe that ; I han't half my belly-full of sights yet.

Moody. Then walk this way.

Peggy. Lord, what a power of fine folks are here.— And Mr. Belville, as I hope to be married. (*Aside.*)

Moody. Come along ; what are you muttering at ?

Peggy. There's the young gentleman there, you were so angry about, that's in love with me.

Moody. No, no ; he's a dangler after your sister, or pretends to be ; but they are all bad alike. Come along, I say.

[*Moody pulls Peggy away. Exit Peggy and Moody, L. H. Belville following. Sparkish, Harcourt, and Alithea come forward.*]

Spark. Come dear madam, for my sake you shall be reconciled to him.

Ali. For your sake I hate him.

Har. That's something too cruel, madam, to hate me for his sake.

Spark. Ay, indeed, madam, too cruel to me, to hate my friend for my sake.

Ali. I hate him because he is your enemy ; and you ought to hate him too, for making love to me, if you love me.

Spark. That's a good one ! I hate a man for loving you ? If he did love you, 'tis but what he can't help ; and 'tis your fault, not his, if he admires you.

Ali. Is it for your honour, or mine, to suffer a man to make love to me, who am to marry you to-morrow ?

Har. (*Crosses to Centre.*) But why, dearest madam, will you be more concerned for his honour than he is himself ? Let his honour alone, for my sake and his. He has no honour.

Spark. How's that ?

Har. But what my dear friend can guard himself ?

Spark. O ho—that's right again.

Ali. You astonish me, sir, with want of jealousy.

Spark. And you make me giddy, madam, with your

jealousy and fears, and virtue and honour. 'Gad, I see virtue makes a woman as troublesome as a little reading or learning.

Har. Come, madam, you see you strive in vain to make him jealous of me: my dear friend is the kindest creature in the world to me.

Spark. Poor fellow!

Har. But his kindness only is not enough for me, without your favour, your good opinion, dear madam: 'tis that must perfect my happiness. Good gentleman, he believes all I say: 'would you would do so!—Jealous of me! I would not wrong him nor you for the world.

Spark. Look you there: hear him, hear him, and not walk away so; come back again.

(Alithea walks carelessly to and fro.)

Har. I love you, madam, so—

Spark. How's that? Nay, now you begin to go too far indeed.

Har. So much, I confess I say I love you, that I would not have you miserable, and cast yourself away upon so unworthy and inconsiderable a thing as what you see here.

(Claps his Hand on his Breast, and points to Sparkish.)

Spark. No, faith, I believe thou wouldst not; now his meaning is plain; but I knew before thou wouldst not wrong me nor her.

Har. No, no, heavens forbid the glory of her sex should fall so low as into the embraces of such a contemptible wretch, the least of mankind—my dear friend here—I injure him. *(Embraces Sparkish.)*

Ali. Very well.

Spark. No, no, dear friend, I knew it: madam, you see he will rather wrong himself than me in giving himself such names.

Ali. Do not you understand him yet?

Spark. Come, come, you shall stay till he has saluted you.

Re-enter MOODY and PEGGY, L.H. BELVILLE at a distance.

Moody. What, invite your wife to kiss men? Monstrous! Are you not ashamed?

Spark. Are you not ashamed that I should have more confidence in the chastity of your family than you have? You must not teach me: I am a man of honour, sir, though I am frank and free; I am frank, sir—

Moody. Very frank, sir, to share your wife with your friends.—You seem to be angry, and yet won't go.

(To Alithea.)

Ali. No impertinence shall drive me away.

Moody. Because you like it.—But you ought to blush at exposing your wife as you do. *(To Sparkish.)*

Spark. What then? It may be I have a pleasure in't as I have to show fine clothes at a play-house the first day, and count money before poor rogues.

Moody. He that shows his wife or money, will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes.

Spark. I love to be envied, and would not marry a wife that I alone could love. Loving alone is as dull as eating alone; and so good night, for I must to Whitehall.—Madam, I hope you are now reconciled to my friend; and so I wish you a good night, madam, and sleep if you can; for to-morrow, you know, I must visit you early with a canonical gentleman. Good night, dear Harcourt—remember to send your brother.

[Exit, L.H.]

Har. You may depend upon me.—Madam, I hope you will not refuse my visit to-morrow, if it should be earlier, with a canonical gentleman, than Mr. Sparkish?

Moody. This gentlewoman is yet under my care, therefore you must yet forbear your freedom with her.

Har. Must, sir?

Moody. Yes, sir, she is my sister.

Har. 'Tis well she is, sir; for I must be her servant, sir.—Madam—

Moody. Come away, sister ; we had been gone if i had not been for you, and so avoided these lewd rake-hells, who seem to haunt us.

Har. I see a little time in the country makes a man turn wild and unsociable, and only fit to converse with his horses, dogs, and his herds.

Moody. I have business, sir, and must mind it: your business is pleasure; therefore you and I must go different ways.

Har. Well, you may go on ; but this pretty young gentleman (*Takes hold of Peggy.*) shall stay with us ; for I suppose his business is the same with ours, pleasure.

Moody. 'Sdeath, he knows her, she carries it so silently; yet if he does not, I should be more silly to discover it first. (*Aside.*) Come, come.

Har. Had you not rather stay with us ? (*To Peggy.*) Pr'ythee who is this pretty young fellow ?

(*To Moody.*)

Moody. One to whom I am guardian.—I wish I could keep her out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Who is he ? I never saw any thing so pretty in all my life.

Moody. Pshaw, do not look upon him so much ; he's a poor, bashful youth ; you'll put him out of countenance. (*Offers to take her away.*)

Har. Here, nephew, let me introduce this young gentleman to your acquaintance. You are very like, and of the same age, and should know one another. Salute him, Dick, à la Françoise

(*Belville kisses her.*)

Moody. I hate French fashions. Men kiss one another. (*Endeavours to take hold of her.*)

Peggy. I am out of my wits. (*Aside.*) What do you kiss me for ? I am no woman.

Har. But you are ten times handsomer.

Peggy. Nay, now you jeer one ; and pray don't jeer me.

Har. Kiss him again, Dick.

Moody. No, no, no;—come away, come away.

(*To Peggy.*)

Har. Why, what haste you are in! Why won't you let me talk with him?

Moody. Because you'll debauch him; he's yet young and innocent.—How she gazes upon him! The devil!
(*Aside.*) Come, pray let him go; I cannot stay fooling any longer: I tell you my wife stays supper for us.

Har. Does she? Come then, we'll all all go sup with her.

Moody. No, no; now I think on't, having staid so long for us, I warrant she's gone to bed.—I wish she and I were well out of your hands. (*Aside.*)

Har. Well then, if she be gone to bed, I wish her and you a good night. But pray, young gentleman, present my humble service to her.

Peggy. Thank you heartily, sir.

Moody. 'Sdeath, she will discover herself yet in spite of me. (*Aside.*)

Bel. And mine too, sir.

Peggy. That I will indeed. (*Bows.*)

Har. Pray give her this kiss for me.

(*Kisses Peggy.*)

Moody. O heavens! What do I suffer? (*Aside.*)

Bel. And this for me. (*Kisses Peggy.*)

Peggy. Thank you, sir.

[*Courtesies. Belville and Harcourt laugh, and*
Exeunt, L.H.]

Moody. O the idiot!—Now 'tis out. Ten thousand cankers gnaw away their lips! (*Aside.*) Come, come, driveller. (*Moody, Peggy, and Althea go out and return, L.H.*) So they are gone at last.—Sister, stay with Peggy, till I find my servant. Don't let her stir an inch: I'll be back directly. (*Exit, L.H.*)

Re-enter HARCOURT and BELVILLE, L.H.

Har. What, not gone yet?—Nephew, show the

young gentlemen Rosamond's pond, while I speak another word to this lady.

[*Exeunt Belville and Peggy, L.H. Alithea and Harcourt struggle.*]

Ali. My brother will go distracted.

Re-enter MOODY, R.H.

Moody. Where? how?—What's become of—gone!—whither?

Ali. In the next walk only, brother.

Moody. Only—only—where—where?

[*Exit hastily, L.H. S.E.*]

Har. What's the matter with him? Why so much concerned?—But, dearest madam—

Re-enter MOODY, L.H. S.E.

Moody. Gone, gone—not to be found—quite gone—ten thousand plagues go with 'em!—Which way went they?

Ali. But in t'other walk, brother.

Moody. T'other walk! t'other devil. Where are they, I say?

Ali. You are too abusive, brother.

Moody. You know where they are, you infamous wretch, eternal shame of your family; which you do not dishonour enough yourself, you think, but you must help her to do it too, thou legion of—

Ali. Good brother—

Moody. Damn'd, damn'd sister! [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Park.*

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY, R.H.

Bel. No disguise could conceal you from my heart: I pretended not to know you, that I might deceive the dragon that continually watches over you; but now he's asleep, let us fly from misery to happiness.

Peggy. Indeed, Mr. Belville, as well as I like you, I

can't think of going away with you so; and as much as I hate my guardian, I must take leave of him a little handsomely, or he will kill me, so he will.

Bel. But, dear miss Peggy, think of your situation; if we don't make the best use of this opportunity, we never may have another.

Peggy. Ay but, Mr. Belville, I am as good as married already; my guardian has contracted me, and there wants nothing but the church ceremony to make us one: I call him husband, and he calls me wife already; he made me do so: and we had been married in church long ago, if the writings could have been finished.

Bel. That's his deceit, my sweet creature.—He pretends to have married you, for fear of your liking any body else.—You have a right to choose for yourself; and there is no law in heaven or earth that binds you before marriage to a man you cannot like.

Peggy. I'fack, no more I believe it does: sister Althea's maid has told me as much. She's a very sensible girl.

Bel. You are in the very jaws of perdition, and nothing but running away can avoid it; the law will finish your chains to-morrow, and the church will rivet them the day after. Let us secure our happiness by escape, and love and fortune will do the rest for us.

Peggy. These are fine sayings, to be sure, Mr. Belville; but how shall we get my fortune out of bud's clutches? We must be a little cunning; 'tis worth trying for. We can at any time run away without it.

Bel. I see by your fears, my dear Peggy, that you live in awe of this brutal guardian; and if he has you once more in his possession, both you and your fortune are secured to him for ever.

Peggy. Ay, but it shan't though; I thank him for that.

Bel. If you marry without his consent, he can but

seize upon half your fortune.—The other half, and a younger brother's fortune, with a treasure of love, are your own.—Take it, my sweetest Peggy, and this moment, or we shall be divided for ever.

(Kneels, and presses her hand.)

Peggy. P'fackins, but we won't.—Your fine talk has bewitched me.

Bel. (Rising.) 'Tis you have bewitch'd me, thou dear, enchanting, sweet simplicity!—Let us fly with the wings of love to my house there, and we shall be safe for ever.

Peggy. And so we will then.—There, squeeze my hand again.—Now run away with me; and if my guardy follows us, the devil take the hindmost, I say.

(Going, L.H.)

Enter MOODY, L.H. hastily, and meets them:

Moody. O! there's my stray'd sheep, and the wolf again in sheep's clothing!—Now I have recovered her, I shall come to my senses again. *(Aside.)* Where have you been, you puppy?

Peggy. Been, bud?—We have been hunting all over the Park to find you.

Bel. From one end to t'other, sir. *(Confusedly.)*

Moody. But not where I was to be found, you young devil you!—Why did you start when you saw me?

Peggy. I'm always frighten'd when I see you; and if I did not love you so well, I should run away from you; so I should. *(Pouts.)*

Moody. But I'll take care you don't.

Peggy. This gentleman has a favour to beg of you, bud? *(Belville makes signs of Dislike.)*

Moody. I am not in a humour to grant favours to young gentlemen, though you may. What have you been doing with this young lady—gentleman, I would say?

Peggy. Fie, bud, you have told all.

Bel. I have been as civil as I could to the young

stranger ; and if you'll permit me, I will take the trouble off your hands, and show the young spark Rosamond's pond ; for he has not seen it yet.—Come, pretty youth, will you go with me? (*Goes to her.*)

Peggy. As my guardian pleases.

Moody. No, no, it does not please me. Whatever I think he ought to see, I shall show him myself. You may visit Rosamond's pond, if you will ; and the bottom of it, if you will.—And so, sir, your servant.

[*Exit Moody, with Peggy under his arm, L.H.*
Belville, R.H.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

Enter LUCY and ALITHEA, R.H.

Ali. Hold your peace.

Lucy. Nay, madam, I will ask you the reason why you would banish poor Mr. Harcourt for ever from your sight? How could you be so hard-hearted.

Ali. 'Twas because I was not hard-hearted.

Lucy. No, no ; 'twas stark love and madness, I warrant.

Ali. It was so ; I would see him no more, because I love him.

Lucy. Hey-day ! a very pretty reason.

Ali. You do not understand me.

Lucy. I wish you may yourself.

Ali. I was engaged to marry, you see, another man, whom my justice will not suffer me to deceive or injure.

Lucy. Can there be a greater cheat or wrong done to

a man, than to give him your person without your heart? I should make a conscience of it.

Ali. Hold your tongue.

Lucy. That you know I can't do, madam; and upon this occasion, I will talk for ever. What, give yourself away to one, that poor I, your maid, would not accept of.

Ali. How, Lucy?

Lucy. I would not, upon my honour, madam. 'Tis never too late to repent. Take a man, and give up your coxcomb, I say.

Enter a Servant, L.H.

Serv. Mr. Sparkish, with company, madam, attends you below.

Ali. I will wait upon 'em [*Exit Servant, L.H.*] My heart begins to fail me, but I must go through with it. —Go with me, Lucy. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Lucy. Not I indeed, madam.—If you will leap the precipice, you shall fall by yourself. What excellent advice have I thrown away!—So I'll e'en take it where it will be more welcome.—Miss Peggy is bent upon mischief against her guardian, and she can't have a better privy-counsellor than myself.—I must be busy one way or another. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Chamber in Moody's House.*

Enter MOODY and PEGGY, L.H.

Moody. I saw him kiss your hand before you saw me. —This pretence of liking my sister was all a blind—the young abandon'd hypocrite! (*Aside.*) Tell me, I say—for I know he likes you, and was hurrying you to his house—tell me, I say—

Peggy. Lord, han't I told it a hundred times over?

Moody. I would try if, in the repetition of the ungrateful tale, I could find her altering it in the least cir-

cumstance ; for if her story is false, she is so too.—
'*Aside.*) Come, how was't, baggage ?

Peggy. Lord, what pleasure you take to hear it sure !

Moody. No, you take more in telling it, I find ; but speak, how was't ? No lies : I saw him kiss you ; he kiss'd you before my face.

Peggy. Nay, you need not be so angry with him neither ; for, to say the truth, he has the sweetest breath I ever knew.

Moody. The devil !—You were satisfied with it then, and would do it again ?

Peggy. Not unless he should force me.

Moody. Force you, changeling ?

Peggy. If I had struggled too much, you know, he would have known I had been a woman ; so I was quiet, for fear of being found out.

Moody. If you had been in petticoats, you would have knock'd him down !

Peggy. With what, bud ?—I could not help myself ; besides, he did it so modestly, and blush'd so, that I almost thought him a girl in men's clothes, and upon his mummery too as well as me ; and if so, there was no harm done, you know.

Moody. This is worse and worse. So 'tis plain she loves him, yet she has not love enough to make her conceal it from me ; but the sight of him will increase her aversion for me, and love for him ; and that love instruct her how to deceive me, and satisfy him, all idiot as she is. Love, 'twas he gave women first their craft, their art of deluding. I must strangle that little monster whilst I can deal with him.—
(*Aside.*) Go, fetch pen, ink, and paper, out of the next room.

Peggy. Yes, I will, bud.

Moody. Go then.

Peggy. I'm going.

Moody. Why don't you go then ?

Peggy. Lord, I'm going.

[*Exit, R.H.*

Moody. This young fellow loves her, and she loves

him ; the rest is all hypocrisy.—How the young modest villain endeavoured to deceive me ! But I'll crush this mischief in the shell.—Why should women have more invention in love than men ? It can only be because they have more desire, more soliciting passions, more of the devil.

Re-enter PEGGY, with Pen, Ink, and Paper, R.H.

Come, minx, sit down and write.

Peggy. Ay, dear, dear bud ; but I can't do't very well.

Moody. I wish you could not at all.

Peggy. But what should I write for ?

Moody. I'll have you write a letter to this young man.

Peggy. O Lord, to the young gentleman a letter ?—

Moody. Yes, to the young gentleman.

Peggy. Lord, you do but jeer ; sure you jest.

Moody. I am not so merry. Come, sit down, and write as I bid you.

Peggy. What, do you think I am a fool ?

Moody. She's afraid I would not dictate my love to him, therefore she's unwilling. (*Aside.*) But you had best begin.

Peggy. Indeed and indeed but I won't, so I won't.

Moody. Why ?

Peggy. Because he's in town. You may send for him here, if you will.

Moody. Very well, you would have him brought to you ? Is it come to this ? I say take the pen and ink, and write, or you'll provoke me.

Peggy. Lord, what do you make a fool of me for ?—Don't I know that letters are never writ but from the country to London, and from London into the country ? Now he's in town, and I'm in town too ; therefore I can't write to him, you know.

Moody. So, I'm glad it's no worse ; she is innocent enough yet. (*Aside.*) Yes, you may, when

your husband bids, write letters to people that are in town.

Peggy. O, may I so? Then I am satisfied.

Moody. Come, begin——*Sir——* (*Dictates.*)

Peggy. Shan't I say dear, sir? You know one says always something more than, bare, sir, up in a corner.

Moody. Write as I bid you, or I will write something with this pen-knife in your face.

Peggy. *Sir——* (*Writes.*)

Moody. *Though I suffered last night your nauseous, loath'd kisses and embraces——Write!*

Peggy. Nay, why should I say so? you know I told you he had a sweet breath.

Moody. Write!

Peggy. Let me put out *loath'd*.

Moody. Write, I say!

Peggy. Well then. (*Writes.*)

Moody. Let me see what you have writ. (*Reads.*)
Though I suffered last night your kisses and embraces——Thou impudent creature, where is nauseous and loath'd?

Peggy. I can't abide to write such filthy words.

Moody. Once more write as I'd have you, or I will spoil your writing with this; I will stab out those eyes that cause my mischief.

(*Holds up the Pen-knife.*)

Peggy. O Lord, I will. (*Writes.*)

Moody. So—so—let's see now;——*though I suffered last night your nauseous loath'd kisses and embraces——go on——yet I would not have you presume that you shall ever repeat them——so——*

(*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. I have writ it.

Moody. O then——*I then conceal'd myself from your knowledge, to avoid your insolencies——*

(*Peggy writes.*)

Peggy. *To avoid——*

Moody. *Your insolencies——*

Peggy. *Your insolencies.*

(*Writes.*)

Moody. The same reason, now I am out of your hands—

Peggy. So—— (Writes.)

Moody. Makes me own to you my unfortunate—
though innocent frolic, in being in boy's clothes.

(Peggy writes.)

Peggy. So——

Moody. That you may for evermore——

Peggy. Evermore?

Moody. Evermore cease to pursue her who hates
and detests you—— (Peggy writes.)

Peggy. So—— (Sighs.)

Moody. What do you sigh for?——detests you
——as much as she loves her husband and her ho-
nour——

Peggy. I vow, husband, he'll ne'er believe I should
write such a letter. (Writes.)

Moody. What, he'd expect a kinder one from you?
Come, now your name only.

Peggy. What, shan't I say—your most faithful hum-
ble servant till death?

Moody. No, tormenting fiend. (Peggy writes.)—
—Her style, I find, would be very soft. (Aside.)
Come, wrap it up now, whilst I go fetch wax and a can-
dle, and write on the outside—For Mr. Belville.

[Exit, L.H.]

Peggy. (Writes.) For Mr. Belville.—So—I am glad
he is gone——Hark, I hear a noise.

Moody. (Within.) Well, well, but can't you call
again——Well, walk in then.

Peggy. (Goes to L.H.D.) I'fack there's folks with
him——

Moody. (Within.) Very well—if he must see me, I'll
come to him.

Peggy. That's pure; now I may think a little——
Why should I send dear Mr. Belville such a letter?—
Can one have no shift? Ah, a London woman would
have had a hundred presently.—Stay—what if I should
write a letter, and wrap it up like this, and write upon
it too?——Ay, but then my guardian would see't——

I don't know what to do——But yet y'vads I'll try, so I will—for I will not send this letter to poor Mr. Belville, come what will on't. (*Writes, and repeats what she writes.*)—Dear, dear, dear, sweet Mr. Belville—so—My guardian would have me send you a base, rude letter, but I won't—so—and would have me say I hate you—but I won't——there——for I'm sure if you and I were in the country at cards together—so—I could not help treading on your toe under the table——so pray keep at home, for I shall be with you as soon as I can—so no more at present from one who am, dear, dear, poor dear Mr. Belville, your loving friend till death do us part, MARGARET THRIEF.——So——now wrap it up just like t'other—so—now write—For Mr. Belville.——But, oh ! what shall I do with it? for here comes my guardian.
(*Puts it in her Bosom.*)

Re-enter MOODY, L.H. with a Candle and Sealing-wax.

Moody. I have been detained by a sparkish coxcomb, who pretended to visit me ; but I fear 'twas to my wife. (*Aside.*) What, have you done ?

Peggy. Ay, ay, bud, just now.

Moody. Let's see't ; what d'ye tremble for?——

(*He opens and reads the first Letter.*)

Peggy. So, I had been finely serv'd if I had giv'n him this. (*Aside.*)

Moody. Come, where's the wax and seal ?

Peggy. Lord, what shall I do ? (*Aside.*) Pray let me see't. Lord, you think I cannot seal a letter ; I will do't, so I will.

(*Snatches the Letter from him, changes it for the other, seals it, and delivers it to him.*)

Moody. Nay, I believe you will learn that and other things too, which I would not have you.

Peggy. So, han't I done it curiously ? I think I have—there's my letter going to Mr. Belville, since he'll needs have me send letters to folks. (*Aside.*)

Moody. 'Tis very well ; but I warrant you would not have it go now ?

Peggy. Yes, indeed, but I would, bud, now.

Moody. Well, you are a good girl then. Come, let me lock you up in your chamber till I come back ; and be sure you come not within three strides of the window when I am gone, for I have a spy in the street. (*Puts her into the Chamber, R.H.D.*) At least 'tis fit she thinks so ; if we do not cheat women, they'll cheat us.—Now I have secur'd all within, I'll deal with the foe without, with false intelligence. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Belville's Lodgings.*

Enter LUCY and BELVILLE, R.H.

Lucy. I run great risks, to be sure, to serve the young lady and you, sir ; but I know you are a gentleman of honour, and would scorn to betray a friend who means you well, and is above being mercenary.

Bel. As you are not mercenary, Mrs. Lucy, I ought to be the more generous ; give me leave to present you with this trifle ; (*Gives her a Ring.*) not as a reward for your services, but as a small token of friendship.

Lucy. Though I scorn to be bribed in any cause, yet I am proud to accept it as a mark of your regard, and as such shall keep it for your sake—and now to business.

Bel. But has the dear creature resolved ?

Lucy. Has she : why she will run away and marry you, in spite of your teeth, the first moment she can break prison ; so you, in your turn must take care not to have your qualms ; I have known several bold gentlemen not able to draw their swords, when a challenge has come too quick upon 'em.

Bel. I assure you, Mrs. Lucy, that I am no bully in love ; and Miss Peggy will meet with her match, come when she will.

Lucy. Ay, so you all say : but talking does no business. Stay at home till you hear from us.

Bel. Blessings on thee, Lucy, for the thought.

Moody. (*Without, L.H.*) But I must and will see him, let him have what company he will.

Lucy. As I hope to be married, Mr. Belville, I hear Mr. Moody's voice. Where shall I hide myself?—If he sees me, we are all undone.

Bel. This is our cursed luck again. What the dévil can he want here? Get into this closet till he is gone. (*Puts Lucy into the closet.*) Don't you stir, Lucy. I must put the best face upon the matter. Now for it. (*Takes a book and reads.*)

Enter MOODY, L.H.

Moody. You will excuse me, sir, for breaking through forms, and your servant's entreaties, to have the honour—but you are alone, sir—your fellow told me below, that you were with company.

Bel. Yes, sir, the best company. (*Shows his book.*) When I converse with my betters, I choose to have 'em alone.

Moody. And I chose to interrupt your conversation ! the business of my errand must plead my excuse.

Bel. You shall be always welcome to me ; but you seem ruffled, sir. What brings you hither, and so seemingly out of humour ?

Moody. Your impertinency—I beg pardon—your modesty I mean.

Bel. My impertinency !

Moody. Your impertinency !

Bel. Sir, from the peculiarity of your character, and your intimacy with my uncle, I shall allow you great privileges ; but you must consider youth has its privileges too ; and as I have not the honour of your acquaintance, I am not obliged to bear with your ill humours, or your ill manners.

Moody. They who wrong me, young man, must

bear with both ; and if you had not made too free with me, I should have taken no liberties with you.

Bel. I could have wished, sir, to have found you a little more civil, the first time I have the honour of a visit from you.

Moody. If that is all you want, young gentleman, you will find me very civil indeed ! There, sir, read that, and let your modesty declare whether I want either kindness or civility. Look you there, sir.

(Gives him a letter.)

Bel. What is it ?

Moody. Only a love-letter, sir ; and from my wife.

Bel. How, is it from your wife ?—Hum and hum.

(Reads.)

Moody. Even from my wife, sir ; am not I wondrous kind and civil to you now too ? But you'll not think her so.

(Aside.)

Bel. Ha ! is this a trick of his or hers ?

(Aside.)

Moody. The gentleman's surpris'd I find ! What, you expected a kinder letter !

Bel. No faith not I : how could I ?

Moody. Yes, yes, I'm sure you did : a man so young and well made as you are, must needs be disappointed, if the women declare not their passion at the first sight or opportunity.

Bel. But what should this mean ? It seems he knows not what the letter contains.

(Aside.)

Moody. Come, ne'er wonder at it so much.

Bel. Faith, I can't help it.

Moody. Now, I think, I have deserv'd your infinite friendship and kindness ; and have show'd myself sufficiently an obliging kind friend and husband ; am I not so, to bring a letter from my wife to her gallant ?

Bel. Ay, indeed, you are the most obliging kind friend and husband in the world ; ha, ha, ha ! Pray, however, present my humble service to her, and tell her I will obey her letter to a tittle, and fulfil her desires, be what they will, or with what difficulty so-ever I do't : and you shall be no more jealous of me, I warrant her and you.

Moody. Well then, fare you well, and play with any man's honour but mine; kiss any man's wife but mine, and welcome—so, Mr. Modesty, your servant.

(*Going, L.H.*)

Enter SPARKISH, L.H. meeting him.

Spark. So brother-in-law that was to have been, I have follow'd you from home to Belville's: I have strange news for you.

Moody. What, are you wiser than you were this morning.

Spark. Faith, I don't know but I am, for I have lost your sister, and I shan't eat half an ounce the less at dinner for it; there's philosophy for you.

Moody. Insensibility you mean. I hope you don't mean to use my sister ill, sir?

Spark. No, sir, she has used me ill; she's in her tantrums; I have had a narrow escape, sir.

Moody. If thou art endow'd with the smallest portion of understanding, explain this riddle.

Bel. Ay, ay, pr'ythee, Sparkish, condescend to be intelligible.

Spark. Why you must know—we had settled to be married—it is the same thing to me whether I am married or not—I have no particular fancy one way or another, and so I told your sister; off' or on, 'tis the same thing to me; but the thing was fix'd, you know—You and my aunt brought it about; I had no hand in it. And, to show you that I was as willing to marry your sister as any other woman, I suffered the law to tie me up to hard terms; and the church would have finish'd me still to harder—but she was taken with her tantrums!

Moody. Damn your tantrums, come to the point.

Spark. Your sister took an aversion to the parson, Frank Harcourt's brother—abused me like a pick-pocket, and swore 'twas Harcourt himself.

Moody. And so it was, for I saw him.

Spark. Why, you are as mad as your sister; I tell you it was Ned, Frank's twin brother.

Moody. What, Frank told you so?

Spark. Ay, and Ned too; they were both in a story.

Moody. What an incorrigible fellow!—Come, come, I must be gone.

Spark. Nay, nay, you shall hear my story out—
She walk'd up within pistol-shot of the church, then twirl'd round upon her heel, call'd me every name she could think of; and when she had exhausted her imagination, and tired her tongue (no easy matter let me tell you), she call'd her chair, sent her footman to buy a monkey before my face, then bid me good morrow with a sneer, and left us with our mouths open in the middle of a hundred people, who were all laughing at us! If these are not tantrums, I don't know what are.

Moody. Ha, ha, ha! I thank thee, Sparkish, from my soul; 'tis a most exquisite story; I have not had such a laugh for this half year. 'Thou art a most a ridiculous puppy, and I am infinitely obliged to thee; ha, ha, ha! [*Exit, L.H.*]

Spark. Did you ever hear the like, Belville?

Bel. O yes; how is it possible to hear such a foolish story, and see thy foolish face, and not laugh at 'em? Ha, ha, ha! (*Lucy in the closet laughs, R.H.*)

Spark. Hey-day! what's that? What have you raised a devil in the closet to make up a laughing chorus at me? I must take a peep— (*Going to the closet.*)

Bel. Indeed but you must not.

Spark. It was a woman's voice.

Bel. So much the better for me.

Spark. Pr'ythee introduce me.

Bel. Though you take a pleasure in exposing your ladies, I choose to conceal mine; so, my dear Sparkish, lest the lady should be sick by too long a confinement, and laughing heartily at you, I must entreat you to withdraw. Pr'ythee excuse me, I must laugh—ha, ha, ha, ha!

Spark. Do you know that I begin to be angry, Belville?

Bel. I can't help that—ha, ha, ha !

Spark. My character's at stake ; I shall be thought a damn'd silly fellow ; I will call Alithea to an account directly. [*Exit*, L.H.

Bel. Ha, ha, ha !

Lucy. (*Peeping out.*) Ha, ha, ha. ha ! O dear sir, let me have my laugh out, or I shall burst. What an adventure. (*Comes out, and laughs.*)

Bel. My sweet Peggy has sent me the kindest letter—and by the dragon himself ; there's a spirit for you !

Lucy. There's simplicity for you ! Show me a town-bred girl with half the genius—Send you a love-letter and by a jealous guardian too ! ha, ha, ha ! 'Tis too much—too much—Ha, ha, ha !—Well, Mr. Belville ! the world goes as it should do—my mistress will exchange her fool for a wit ; Miss Peggy her brute for a pretty young fellow : I shall dance at two weddings ; be well rewarded by both parties ; get a husband myself : and be as happy as the best of you : and so your humble servant. [*Exit*, L.H.

Bel. Success attend you, Lucy. [*Exit*, R.H.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Moody's House.*

PEGGY, discovered alone, leaning on her Elbow on a Table, with Pen, Ink, and Paper.

Peggy. Well, 'tis e'en so ; I have got the London disease they call love ; I am sick of my guardian, and dying for Mr. Belville ! I have heard this distemper call'd a fever, but methinks it is like an ague ; for when I think of my guardian, I tremble and am so cold ; but when I think of my gallant, dear Mr. Belville,

my hot fit comes, and I am all in a fever indeed. Ah! poor Mr. Belville! Well, I will not stay here; therefore I'll make an end of my letter to him, which shall be a finer letter than my last, because I have studied it like any thing. Oh! sick, sick!

Enter MOODY, M.D. who seeing her writing, steals softly behind her, and looking over her Shoulder.

Moody. What, (*Snatches the Paper from her.*) writing more letters?

Peggy. O Lord, bud! why d'ye fright me so?

(*She offers to run out; he stops her, and reads.*)

Moody. How's this! nay, you shall not stir, madam. (*Reads.*) *Dear, dear, Mr. Belville*—Very well, I have taught you to write letters to good purpose—but let's see't—*First, I am to beg your pardon for my boldness in writing to you, which I'd have you to know I would not have done had you not said first you loved me so extremely; which if you do, you will never suffer me to be another man's, who I loath, nauseate and detest;*—Now you can write these filthy words. But what follows?—*therefore I hope you will speedily find some way to free me from this unfortunate match, which was never I assure you of my choice; but I'm afraid 'tis already too far gone; however, if you love me as I do you, you will try what you can do; you must help me away before to-morrow, or else, alas! I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—our—what is to follow our?—Speak, what?—Our journey into the country, I suppose.—Oh, woman! damn'd woman! and love damn'd love! their old tempter; for this is one of his miracles; in a moment he can make those blind that could see, and those see that were blind; those dumb that could speak, and those prattle who were dumb before.—But make an end of your letter, and then I'll make an end of you thus, and all my plagues together.* (*Draws his sword.*)

Peggy. O Lord ! O Lord ! you are such a passionate man, bud !

Moody. Come take the pen, and make an end of the letter, just as you intended ; if you are false in a tittle I shall soon perceive it, and punish you with this as you deserve. (*Lays his Hand on his sword.*)—write what was to follow—let's see—*You must make haste and help me away before to-morrow, or else I shall be for ever out of your reach, for I can defer no longer our—*what follows our ?—

(*Peggy takes the Pen, and writes.*)

Peggy. Must all out then, bud ?—Look you there then.

Moody. Let's see—for *I can defer no longer our wedding—Your slighted ALITHIA.*—What's the meaning of this ? My sister's name to't ? Speak ; unriddle.

Peggy. Yes, indeed, bud.

Moody. But why her name to't ? Speak—speak, I say.

Peggy. Ay, but you'll tell her again ; if you would not tell her again—

Moody. I will not ; I am stunn'd ; my head turns round. Speak.

Peggy. Won't you tell her, indeed, and indeed.

Moody. No ; speak, I say.

Peggy. She'll be angry with me ; but I would rather she should be angry with me than you, bud. And to tell the truth, 'twas she made me write the letter, and taught me what I should write.

Moody. Ha !—I thought the style was somewhat better than her own. (*Aside.*) Could she come to you to teach you, since I lock'd you up alone ?

Peggy. Oh, through the key-hole, bud.

Moody. But why should she make you write a letter for her to him, since she can write herself ?

Peggy. Why she said because—

Moody. Because what—because—

Peggy. Why because, bud—

Moody. Because what, I say ?

Peggy. Because, lest Mr. Belville, as he was so

young, should be inconstant, and refuse her; or be vain afterwards, and show the letter, she might disown it, the hand not being hers.

Moody. Belville again!—Am I to be deceiv'd again with that young hypocrite?

Peggy. You have deceiv'd yourself, bud; you have indeed. I have kept the secret for my sister's sake, as long as I could—but you must know it—and shall know it too. (Cries.)

Moody. Dry your tears.

Peggy. You always thought he was hankering after me—Good law! he's dying for Alithea, and Alithea for him; they have had private meetings; and he was making love to her before yesterday, from the tavern window, when you thought it was me. I would have discovered all, but she made me swear to deceive you; and so I have finely; have not I, bud?

Moody. Why did you write that foolish letter to him then, and make me more foolish to carry it?

Peggy. To carry on the joke, bud—to oblige them?

Moody. And will nothing serve her but that great baby?—He's too young for her to marry.

Peggy. Why do you marry me then?—'Tis the same thing, bud.

Moody. No, no, 'tis quite different. How innocent she is! (Aside.)—But hark you, madam, your sister went out this morning, and I have not seen her within since.

Peggy. Alack-a-day, she has been crying all day above, it seems, in a corner.

Moody. Where is she? let me speak with her.

Peggy. O Lord! then she'll discover all. (Aside.) Pray hold, bud: what, d'ye' mean to discover me? She'll know I have told you then. Pray, bud, let me talk with her first.

Moody. I must speak with her to know whether Belville ever made her any promise, and whether she will be married to Sparkish or no.

Peggy. Pray, dear bud, don't till I have spoken with her, and told her that I have told you all; for she'll kill me else,

Moody. Go then, and bid her come to me.

Peggy. Yes, yes, bud.

Moody. Let me see—

Peggy. I have just got time to know of Lucy, who first set me to work, what lie I shall tell next; for I am e'en at my wits end. [*Aside, and Exit, R.H.D.*]

Moody. Well, I resolve it, Belville shall have her: I'd rather give him my sister than lend him my wife; and such an alliance will prevent his pretensions to my wife, sure; I'll make him of kin to her, and then he won't care for her.

Re-enter PEGGY, R.H.D.

Peggy. O Lord, bud, I told you what anger you would make me with my sister.

Moody. Won't she come?

Peggy. No, she won't, she's ashamed to look you in the face; she'll go directly to Mr. Belville, she says. Pray let her have her way, bud—she won't be pacified if you don't—and will never forgive me. For my part, bud, I believe, but don't tell any body, they have broken a piece of silver between 'em—or have contracted one another, as we have done, you know, which is the next thing to being married.

Moody. Pooh! you fool—she ashamed of talking with me about Belville, because I made the match for her with Sparkish! But Sparkish is a fool, and I have no objection to Belville's family or fortune—tell her so.

Peggy. I will, bud. (*Going, R.H.*)

Moody. Stay, stay, Peggy, let her have her own way; she shall go to Belville herself, and I'll follow her—that will be best—let her have her whim.

Peggy. You're in the right, bud; for they have certainly had a quarrel, by her crying and hanging her head so: I'll be hang'd if her eyes an't swell'd out of her head, she's in such a piteous taking.

Moody. Belville shan't use her ill, I'll take care of that; if he has made her a promise, he shall keep to

to it: but she had better go first—I will follow her at a distance, that she may have no interruption; and I will wait in the Park before I see them, that they may come to a reconciliation before I come upon 'em.

Peggy. Law, bud, how wise you are!—I wish I had half your wisdom; you see every thing at once. Stand a one side fien—there, a little further that way.

Moody. And so I will; she shan't see me till I break in upon her at Belville's. (*Sits down in the middle of the Stage.*)

Peggy. Now for it. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Moody. My case is something better; for suppose the worst—should Belville use her ill—I had rather fight him for not marrying my sister, than for debauching my wife, for I will make her mine absolutely to-morrow; and of the two, I had rather find my sister too forward than my wife; I expected no other from her free education, as she calls it, and her passion for the town. Well, wife and sister are names which make us expect love and duty, pleasure and comfort; but we find 'em plagues and torments, and are equally, though differently, troublesome to their keeper. But here she comes. (*Steps aside, R.H.*)

Re-enter Peggy, R.H.D. dressed like Alitheu; and as she passes over the Stage, seems to sigh, sob, and wipe her eyes.

Peggy. Heigho! [*Exit. L.H.*]

Moody. (*Comes forward.*) There the poor devil goes, sighing and sobbing, a woeful example of the fatal consequences of a town education; but I am bound in duty, as well as inclination, to do my utmost to save her—but first I'll secure my own property.—(*Opens R.H.D. and calls.*)—Peggy! Peggy! my dear!—I will return as soon as possible—do you hear me? Why don't you answer? You may read in the book I bought you till I come back.—As the Jew says in the play, “Fast bind, fast find.” (*Locks the Door.*) This is the best, and only security for female affections.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*The Park, before Belville's House.**Enter SPARKISH, fuddled, R.H.*

Spark. If I can but meet with her, or any body that belongs to her, they will find me a match for 'em. When a man has wit, and a great deal of it, Champagne gives it a double edge, and nothing can withstand it—'tis a lighted match to gunpowder.—I was right to consult my friends, and they all agree with Moody, that I make a damn'd ridiculous figure, as matters stand at present. I'll consult Belville—this is his house—he's my friend too—and no fool—It shall be so. Damn it, I must not be ridiculous. (*Going to the Door, sees Peggy coming.*) Hold! hold! if the Champagne does not hurt my eye-sight, while it sharpens my wit, the enemy is marching up this way.—Come on, madam Alithea; now for a smart fire; and then let's see who will be ridiculous.

Enter PEGGY, R.H.

Peggy. Dear me, I begin to tremble; there is Mr. Sparkish, and I can't get to Mr. Belville's house without passing by him. He sees me, and will discover me; he seems in liquor too.—Bless me!

Spark. O ho! she stands at bay a little; she don't much relish the engagement. The first blow is half the battle. I'll be a little figurative with her. (*Aside—Approaches her.*) I find, madam, you like a solo better than a duet. You need not have been walking alone this evening, if you had been wiser yesterday.—What, nothing to say for yourself?—Repentance, I suppose, makes you as awkward and as foolish as the poor country girl your brother has lock'd up in Pall-mall.

Peggy. I'm frighten'd out of my wits.

(*Tries to pass him.*)

Spark. Not a step further shall you go till you give

me an account of your behaviour, and make me reparation for being ridiculous.—What, dumb still ! Ther if you won't by fair means, I must squeeze you to a confession. (*As he goes to seize her, she slips by him ; but he catches hold of her before she reaches Belville's Door.*) Not quite so fast, if you please.—Come, come, let me see your modest face, and hear your soft tongue, or I shall be tempted to use you ill.

Enter MOODY, R.H.

Moody. Hands off, you ruffian ! How dare you use a lady, and my sister, in this manner ?

(*Takes Sparkish from her.*)

Spark. She's my property, sir ; transferred to me by you ; and though I would give her up to any body for a dirty sword-knot, yet I won't be bullied out of my right, though it is not worth that.—

(*Snaps his fingers.*)

Moody. There's a fellow to be a husband !—You are justified in despising him and flying from him. I'll defend you with my purse and my sword.—Knock at that door, and let me speak to Belville. (*Peggy knocks at D.F.L.H. ; when the footman opens it she runs in, L.H.*)—Is your master at home, friend ?

Foot. Yes, sir.

Moody. Tell him then that I have rescued that lady from this gentleman, and by her desire, and my consent, she flies to him for protection ; if he can get a parson, let him marry her this minute ; tell him so, and shut the door. [*Exit Footman, D.F.L.H.*] And now, sir, if your wine has given you courage, you had better show it upon this occasion ; for you are still damn'd ridiculous.

Spark. Did you ever hear the like ?—Lookye, Mr. Moody, we are in the Park, and to draw a sword is an offence to the court ; so you may vapour as long as you please. A woman of so little taste is not worth fighting for ; she's not worth my sword ! But if you'll

fight me to-morrow morning for diversion, I am your man.

Moody. Relinquish your title in the lady to Belville peaceably, and you may sleep in a whole skin.

Spark. Belville ! he would not have your sister with the fortune of a nabob ; no, no, his mouth waters at your country tit-bit at home ; much good may it do him.

Moody. And you think so, puppy—ha, ha, ha !

Spark. Yes, I do, mastiff—ha, ha, ha !

Moody. Then thy folly is complete—ha, ha, ha !

Spark. Thine will be so, when thou hast married thy country innocent—ha, ha, ha !

(They laugh at each other.)

Re-enter HARCOURT, R.H.

Spark. What, my boy Harcourt !

Moody. What brings you here, sir ?

Har. I followed you to Belville's to present a near relation of yours, and a nearer one of mine, to you.

[Exit, R.H.]

Spark. What's the matter now ?

Re-enter HARCOURT, with ALITHEA, R.H.

Har. Give me leave, gentlemen, without offence to either, to present Mrs. Harcourt to you !

Spark. Alithea ! your wife !—Mr. Moody, are you in the clouds too ?

Moody. If I am not in a dream, I am the most miserable walking dog that ever run mad with his misfortunes and astonishment !

Har. Why so, Jack ? Can you object to my happiness, when this gentleman was unworthy of it ?

(Moody walks about in a rage.)

Spark. This is very fine, very fine indeed !—Where's your story about Belville now, 'squire Moody ? Pr'y-thee don't chafe, and stare, and stride, and beat thy head, like a mad tragedy poet—but out with thy tropes and figures.

Moody. Zounds ! I can't bear it.

(*Goes hastily to Belville's Door, and knocks hard.*)

Ali. Dear brother, what's the matter ?

Moody. The devil's the matter ! the devil and women together. (*Knocks again.*) I'll break the door down, if they won't answer. (*Knocks again.*)

A Footman appears in the Balcony, in flat, L.H.

Foot. What would your honour please to have ?

Moody. Your master, rascal.

Foot. He is obeying your commands, sir ; and the moment he has finished, he will do himself the pleasure to wait on you.

Moody. You sneering villain you, if your master does not produce that she-devil, who is now with him, and who with a face of innocence, has cheated and undone me, I'll set fire to his house.

[*Exit Footman from the Balcony.*]

Spark. 'Gad so ! now I begin to smoke the business. Well said, simplicity, rural simplicity ! 'Egad ! if thou hast trick'd Cerberus here, I shall be so ravish'd that I will give this couple a wedding dinner. Pray, Mr. Moody, who's damn'd ridiculous now ?

Moody. (*Going to Sparkish.*) Look ye, sir—don't grin, for if you dare to show your teeth at my misfortunes, I'll dash 'em down your impudent throat, you jackanapes.

Spark. (*Quite calm.*) Very fine, faith—but I have no weapons to butt with a mad bull, so you may toss and roar by yourself, if you please.

Enter BELVILLE, in the Balcony.

Bel. What does my good friend want with me ?

Moody. Are you a villain, or are you not ?

Bel. I have obey'd your commands, sir.

Moody. What have you done with the girl, sir ?

Bel. Made her my wife, as you desired.

Spark. Very true, I am your witness—

Moody. She's my wife, and I demand her.

Enter PEGGY in the Balcony.

Peggy. No, but I an't though, bud.—What's the matter, dear, are you angry with me?

Moody. How dare you look me in the face, cockatrice?

Peggy. How dare you look me in the face, bud? Have you not given me to another, when you ought to have married me yourself? Have you not pretended to be married to me, when you knew in your conscience you was not? And have you not been shilly-shally for a long time? So that if I had not married dear Mr. Belville, I should not have married at all—so I should not.

(Belville and Peggy retire from the Balcony.)

Spark. Extremely pleasant, faith; ha, ha, ha!

Moody. I am stupified with shame, rage, and astonishment—my fate has o'ercome me—I can struggle no more with it. *(Sighs.)* What is left me?—I cannot bear to look, or be looked upon—I will hurry down to my old house, take a twelvemonths provision into it—cut down my drawbridge, run wild about my garden, which shall grow as wild as myself—then will I curse the world, and every individual in it—and when my rage and spirits fail me, I will be found dead among the nettles and thistles, a woeful example of the baseness and treachery of one sex, and of the falsehood, lying, perjury, deceit, impudence, and damnation of the other. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Spark. Very droll, and extravagantly comic, I must confess; ha, ha, ha!

Enter BELVILLE and PEGGY, from D.F.L.H.

Lookye, Belville, I wish you joy with all my heart—you have got the prize, and perhaps have caught a tartar—that's no business of mine—If you want evidence

for Mr. Moody's giving his consent to your marriage, I shall be ready. I bear no ill will to that pair : I wish you happy ; (*To Alithea and Harcourt.*)—though I'm sure they'll be miserable—and so your humbleservant. [*Exit, L.H.*]

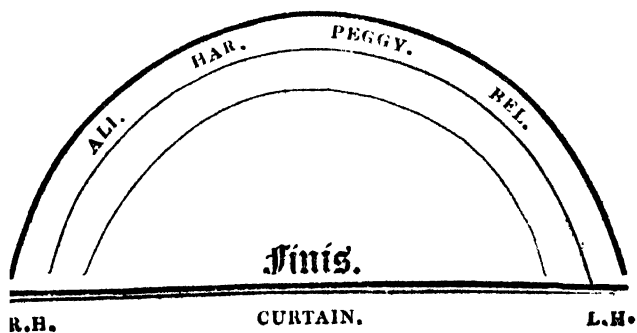
Peggy. I hope yōn forgive me, Alithea, for playing your brother this trick ; indeed I should have only made him and myself miserable, had we married together.

Ali. Then 'tis much better as it is. But I am yet in the dark how this matter has been brought about ; how your innocence, my dear, has outwitted his worldly wisdom.

Peggy. I am sure I'll do any thing to please my bud, but marry him.

But you, good gentry, what say you to this ?
 You are to judge me—have I done amiss ?
 I've reasons will convince you all, and strong ones ;
 Except old folks, who hanker after young ones ;
 Bud was so passionate, and grown so thrifty !
 'Twas a sad life—and then, he was near fifty !
 I'm but nineteen—my husband too is young,
 So soft, so gentle, such a winning tongue !
 Have I, pray ladies, speak, done very wrong ?
 As for poor bud, 'twas honest to deceive him !
 More virtuous sure to cheat him than to grieve him.
 Great folks, I know, will call me simple slut ;
 “ Marry for love,” they cry, “ the country put ;”
 Marriage with them's a fashion—soon grows cool ;
 But I'm for always loving like a fool.
 With half my fortune I would rather part,
 Than be all finery with an aching heart.
 For these strange awkward notions don't abuse me ;
 And, as I know no better, pray excuse me,

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





MRS BUNN.
AS ALICIA.

Orberry's Edition.

JANE SHORE.

A

TRAGEDY;

By Nicholas Rowe.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian.

London.

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Remarks.

JANE SHORE.

It is a rare felicity in any author to produce two tragedies which shall last their century. Rowe, the author of the *Fair Penitent*, and of *Jane Shore*, has attained this posthumous honour. It is curious to reflect in this respect on the disproportion between human wishes and their accomplishment. The aspiration of the mind is after the highest excellence, its longings are after immortality: its performance is generally as nothing; its triumph but for a moment!—How many matchless works have perished in embryo, even with the thought that gave them birth?—how many have fallen still-born from the press?—how many have been damned on their first appearance, “a sacrifice to grinning scorn and infamy?”—how many have lingered on a few nights, and then dropped into deathless oblivion, mocking their authors’ feverish hopes?—how many have been popular for a time, and then given place to others?—how few have remained, what all were designed to be?—heirs of universal praise, and the lasting ornament and delight of the public mind!—There are, it should seem, but two ways in which an author can hope to acquire this permanent reputation and influence, over the thoughts and feelings of others; either by the force and originality of his own conceptions, or by the warmth and vigour with which he enters into, and is able to express popular and obvious sentiments. The last of these appears to have been the *forte* of Rowe, in his tragic compositions; and is that which has given them so considerable and fixed a hold, over the minds of his countrymen. In writing for the stage, he does not seem to consult his own breast, or to consider what the parties themselves would have felt; but to give language to the thoughts that would be suggested on such an occasion, to the spectators.

His great object is stage-effect, and common sympathy ; and this he secures,—first, by the selection of a well-known, or perfectly intelligible story,—by striking situations and obvious sources of calamity ; and, secondly, by ingrafting on the tragic spectacle frequent and vehement exclamations of grief,—of wonder, of horror, &c. ; and general reflections of morality, such as are the offspring rather of speculative indifference, than of real passion. If to unlock and control the deeper and more powerful springs of thought and feeling is the highest proof of genius, yet to obtain the almost unlimited command over the more vulgar and superficial sympathy which is excited by well-placed shew and verbal declamation, is no mean nor easy task ; as may be seen, from the few who succeed in doing it with continued success. *Jane Shore* is a tragedy, the reputation of which is embalmed in the tears it has drawn from numberless eyes. The aggravated distress of the heroine, her reverse of fortune, her unmerited ill treatment by those she trusts, the attachment of her husband to her, (the motives of which we could only respect in her peculiar circumstances,) her boasted beauty of form, and her apparent patience and resignation of temper, certainly make an appeal to the affections which is not easily resisted. *Alicia* is not a very pleasant, though a very probable character ; and would hardly be endured in the virulence of her actions, and the extravagance of her speeches ; but that she meets with a triumphant foil in her more amiable, but not more fortunate friend. The mercenary generosity of *Hastings*, which is turned into sudden hatred on his meeting with an unexpected repulse to his amorous overtures, is well understood, and distinctly portrayed. *Gloster* is a character of considerable stateliness of deportment, and energy of purpose ; and would have a better effect, did we not compare it indirectly with the same character in *Shakspeare*. The incident of his coming into the council-chamber with his bared arm, and accusing *Hastings* of withering it up by sorcery, is literally taken from *Shakspeare* ; but luckily for *Rowe*, *Cibber* has left out this striking scene, in his alteration of *Richard the Third*. The language of *Rowe*, is often modelled on that of his great predecessor ; and is sometimes, even borrowed from Scripture :—so willing was our author to avail himself of any resources within his reach. His verse is smooth and equal, if not flowing or mellifluous ;

and is raised above prose, if it is not elevated into the highest strain of poetry. Perhaps, the chief character in this play has never been so well represented, as it was by Mrs. Siddons; and indeed, it requires the highest dignity of the human form and expression, to reconcile us completely to the exhibition of the last calamity of human nature,—the failure of life from the want of its common sustenance. W. H.

Mr. Nicholas Rowe was born at Little Beckford, in Bedfordshire, in 1673; he was first sent to a private school at Highgate; and, being afterwards removed to Westminster, was at twelve years chosen one of the King's scholars. At sixteen he was entered a student of the Middle Temple. When he was nineteen, he was, by the death of his father, left more to his own direction, and probably from that time suffered law gradually to give way to poetry. At twenty-five he produced the "Ambitious Step-mother;" which was received with so much favour, that he devoted himself from that time wholly to elegant literature. He was willing enough to improve his fortune by other arts than poetry. He was Under-Secretary for three years when the duke of Queensberry was Secretary of State: and afterwards applied to the Earl of Oxford for some public employment. Oxford enjoined him to study Spanish; and when, some time afterwards he came again, and said that he had mastered it, dismissed him with this congratulation, "Then, sir, I envy you the pleasure of reading Don Quixote in the original." At the accession of King George he was made Poet-laureat. In person he was graceful and well made, his face regular and of manly beauty.—He was master of most parts of polite learning, especially the classical authors, both Greek and Latin; understood the French, Italian and Spanish Languages, and spoke the first fluently, and the others tolerably well. He was twice married;—first to the daughter of a Mr. Parsons, one of the Auditors of the Revenue; and afterwards to a daughter of a Mr. Devenish, of a good family in Dorsetshire. By the first he had a son, and by the second a daughter. He died the sixth of December, 1718, in the forty-fifth year of his age, and was buried in Westminster Abbey:—His Dramatic Works are;—*The Ambitious Step Mother, T.—Tamerlane, T.—Fair Penitent, T.—The Biter, C.—Ulysses, T.—Royal Convert, T.—Jane Shore, T.—and Lady Jane Grey, T.*

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is two hours and thirty minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes;—the second, thirty-five;—the third, twenty;—the fourth, thirty-five;—the fifth, thirty. The half price commences, generally, at about a quarter before nine.

Stage Directions.

By R.H..... is meant..... Right Hand.
L.H..... Left Hand.
S.E..... Second Entrance.
U.E..... Upper Entrance.
M.D..... Middle Door.
D.F..... Door in flat.
R.H.D..... Right Hand Door.
L.H.D..... Left Hand Door.

PROLOGUE.

To-night, if you have brought your good old taste,
We'll treat you with a downright English feast :
A tale, which, told long since in homely wise,
•Hath never fail'd of melting gentle eyes.
Let no nice sir despise our hapless dame,
Because recording ballads chaunt her name ;
Those venerable ancient song-enditers
Soar'd many a pitch above our modern writers :
•They caterwaul'd in no romantic ditty,
Sighing for Phillis', or Chloe's pity.
Justly they drew the fair, and spoke her plain,
And sung her by her christian name—'twas Jane.
Our numbers may be more refin'd than those,
But what we've gain'd in verse, we've lost in prose.
Their words no shuffling, double-meaning knew,
Their speech was homely, but their hearts were true.
In such an age, immortal Shakspeare wrote,
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught ;
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,
And strength and nature made amends for art.
Our humble author does his steps pursue,
He owns he had the mighty bard in view ;
And in these scenes has made it more his care,
To rouse the passions, than to charm the ear.
Yet for those gentle beaux who love the chime,
The end of acts still gingle into rhyme.
The ladies, too, he hopes will not complain,
Here are some subjects for a softer strain,
A nymph forsaken, and a perjur'd swain.
What most he fears, is, lest the dames should frown,
The dames of wit and pleasure about town
To see our picture drawn, unlike their own.
But lest that error should provoke to fury
The hospitable hundreds of Old Drury,

}

}

PROLOGUE.

He bid me say, in our Jane Shore's defence,
She dol'd about the charitable pence,
Built hospitals, turn'd saint, and dy'd long since.
For her example, whatsoe'er we make it,
They have their choice to let alone or take it.
Though few, as I conceive, will think it meet,
To weep so sorely for a sin so sweet :
Or mourn and mortify the pleasant sense,
To rise in tragedy two ages hence.

}

Costume.

LORD HASTINGS.

Blue doublet, trunks, and cloak, trimmed with gold, black velvet hat, and white feathers.

DUKE OF GLOSTER.

A purple velvet doublet and trunks, crimson velvet robe, richly embroidered.

BELMOUR.

Grey dress trimmed with black.

RATCLIFFE.

Buff doublet and trunks, scarlet cloak, embroidered with silver.

CATESBY.

Light blue doublet and trunks, and cloak trimmed with silver.

SHORE.

First dress.—Slate coloured kerseymere.—Second dress.—Black velvet.

JANE SHORE.

First dress.—Grey satin Old English dress trimmed with point lace, and lined with black.—Second dress.—White muslin.

ALICIA.

First dress.—White satin, trimmed with beads and point lace.—Second dress.—Black velvet, and black crape veil.

Persons Represented.

As it was originally acted, 1713.

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Lord Hastings</i> | Mr. Booth. |
| <i>Duke of Gloster</i> | Mr. Cibber. |
| <i>Belmour</i> | Mr. Mills. |
| <i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i> | Mr. Bowman. |
| <i>Sir William Catesby</i> | Mr. Husband. |
| <i>Shore</i> | Mr. Wilkes. |
| <i>Jane Shore</i> | Mrs. Oldfield. |
| <i>Alicia</i> | Mrs. Porter. |



| | <i>Drury-lane.</i> | <i>Covent-garden.</i> |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Lord Hastings</i> | Mr. Rae. | Mr. Young. |
| <i>Duke of Gloster</i> | Mr. Bengough. | Mr. Egerton. |
| <i>Belmour</i> | Mr. Hamblin. | Mr. Claremont. |
| <i>Sir Richard Ratcliffe</i> | Mr. Marshall. | Mr. Treby. |
| <i>Sir William Catesby</i> | Mr. Ley. | Mr. Connor. |
| <i>Shore</i> | Mr. Holland. | Mr. Macready. |
| <i>Jane Shore</i> | Mrs. W. West. | Miss O'Neill. |
| <i>Alicia</i> | Mrs. Glover. | Mrs. Bunn. |

Lords of the Council, &c.

JANE SHORE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Tower.*

Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE, and CATESBY, R.H.

Glos. Thus far success attends upon our councils
And each event has answered to my wish;
The queen and all her upstart race are quell'd;
Dorset is banish'd, and her brother Rivers,
Ere this, lies shorter by the head at Pomfret.
The nobles have with joint concurrence, nam'd me
Protector of the realm; my brother's children,
Young Edward and the little York are lodg'd
Here, safe within the Tower. How say you, sirs,
Does not this business wear a lucky face?
The sceptre and the golden wreath of royalty
Seem hung within my reach.

Sir R. Then take 'em to you,
And wear them long and worthily: you are
The last remaining male of princely York;
(For Edward's boys, the state esteems not of 'em,)
And therefore on your sov'reignty and rule

2

The commonweal does her dependence make,
And leans upon your highness' able hand.

Cates. And yet to-morrow does the council meet
To fix a day for Edward's coronation.

Who can expound this riddle ?

Glos. That can I.

Those lords are each one my approv'd good friends,
Of special trust and nearness to my bosom ;
And howsoever busy they may seem,
And diligent to bustle in the state,
Their zeal goes on no further than we lead,
And at our bidding stays.

Cates. Yet there is one,
And he amongst the foremost in his power
Of whom I wish your highness were assur'd.
For me, perhaps it is my nature's fault,
I own I doubt of his inclining much.

Glos. I guess the man at whom your words would
point:

Hastings—

Cates. The same.

Glos. He bears me great good will.

Cates. 'Tis true, to you, as to the lord protector,
And Gloster's duke, he bows with lowly service :
But were he bid to cry, God save king Richard,
Then tell me in what terms he would reply.
Believe me, I have prov'd the man, and found him :
I know he bears a most religious reverence
To his dead master Edward's royal memory.
And whither that may lead him, is most plain.
Yet more—One of that stubborn sort he is,
Who, if they once grow fond of an opinion,
They call it honour, honesty, and faith,
And sooner part with life than let it go.

Glos. And yet this tough, impracticable heart,
Is govern'd by a dainty-finger'd girl ;
Such flaws are found in the most worthy natures ;
A laughing, toying, wheedling, whimpering she
Shall make him amble on a gossip's message,

And take the distaff with a hand as patient
As e'er did Hercules.

Sir R. The fair Alicia,
Of noble birth and exquisite of feature,
Has held him long a vassal to her beauty.

Cates. I fear he fails in his allegiance there ;
Or my intelligence is false, or else
'The dame has been too lavish of her feast,
And fed him till he loathes.

Glos. No more, he comes.

Enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. Health, and the happiness of many days,
Attend upon your grace.

Glos. My good lord Chamberlain,
We're much beholden to your gentle friendship.

Has. My lord, I come an humble suitor to you.

Glos. In right good time. Speak out your pleasure
freely.

Has. I am to move your highness in behalf
Of Shore's unhappy wife.

Glos. Say you, of Shore ?

Has. Once a bright star, that held her place on high:
The first and fairest of our English dames,
While Royal Edward held the sov'reign rule.
Now sunk in grief, and pining with despair,
Her waning form no longer shall incite
Envy in woman, or desire in man.
She never sees the sun, but through her tears,
And wakes to sigh the live-long night away.

Glos. Marry ! the times are badly chang'd with her,
From Edward's days to these. Then all was jollity,
Feasting and mirth, light wantonness and laughter,
Piping and playing, minstrelsy and masking ;
'Till life fled from us like an idle dream,
A show of mummary without a meaning.
My brother rest and pardon to his soul,
Is gone to his account ; for this his minion,
The revel-rout is done—But you were speaking

Concerning her—I have been told, that you
Are frequent in your visitation to her.

Has. No further, my good lord, than friendly pity,
And tender-hearted charity allow.

Glos. Go to : I did not mean to chide you for it.
For, sooth to say, I hold it noble in you
To cherish the distress'd—On with your tale.

Has. Thus it is gracious sir, that certain officers,
Using the warrant of your mighty name,
With insolence unjust, and lawless power,
Have seiz'd upon the lands, which late she held
By grant, from her great master Edward's bounty.

Glos. Somewhat of this, but slightly have I heard ;
And though some counsellors of forward zeal,
Some of most ceremonious sanctity,
And bearded wisdom, often have provok'd
The hand of justice to fall heavy on her ;
Yet still, in kind compassion of her weakness,
And tender memory of Edward's love,
I have withheld the merciless stern law
From doing outrage on her helpless beauty.

Has. Good heav'n, who renders mercy back for
mercy,
With open-handed bounty shall repay you :
This gentle deed shall fairly be set foremost,
To screen the wild escapes of lawless passion
And the long train of frailties flesh is heir to.

Glos. Thus far, the voice of pity pleaded only :
Our further and more full extent of grace
Is given to your request. Let her attend,
And to ourself deliver up her griefs.
She shall be heard with patience, and each wrong
At full redress'd. But I have other news,
Which much import us both ; for still my fortunes
Go hand in hand with yours : our common foes,
The queen's relations, our new-fangled gentry,
Have fall'n their haughty crests—that for your privacy.
[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II,—*An apartment in Jane Shore's House.**Enter BELMOUR, and DUMONT, L.H.*

Bel. How she has lived you have heard my tale
already ;

The rest your own attendance in her family,
Where I have found the means this day to place you,
And nearer observation, best will tell you.
See with what sad and sober cheer she comes.

Enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Sure, or I read her visage much amiss,
Or grief besets her hard. Save you, fair lady,
The blessings of the cheerful morn be on you,
And greet your beauty with its opening sweets.

Jane S. My gentle neighbour ! your good wishes
still

Pursue my hapless fortunes ; ah ! good Belmour !
How few, like thee, inquire the wretched out,
And court the offices of soft humanity.
Like thee reserve their raiment for the naked,
Reach out their bread to feed the crying orphan,
Or mix their pitying tears with those that weep.
Thy praise deserves a better tongue than mine,
To speak and bless thy name. Is this the gentleman,
Whose friendly service you commended to me ?

Bel. Madam, it is !

Jane S. A venerable aspect ! (*Aside.*)

Age sits with decent grace upon his visage,
And worthily becomes his silver locks ;
He wears the marks of many years well spent,
Of virtue, truth well try'd, and wise experience ;
A friend like this would suit my sorrows well.

(*Crosses to Centre.*)

Fortune, I fear me, sir, has meant you ill, (*To Dum.*)
Who pays your merit with that scanty pittance,
Which my poor hand and humble roof can give.

But to supply those golden vantages,
Which elsewhere you might find, expect to meet
A just regard and value for your worth,
The welcome of a friend, and the free partnership
Of all that little good the world allows me.

Dum. You over-rate me much; and all my answer
Must be my future truth; let that speak for me,
And make up my deserving.

Jane S. Are you of England?

Dum. No, gracious lady, Flanders claims my birth;
At Antwerp has my constant biding been,
Where sometimes I have known more plenteous days
Than these which now my failing age affords.

Jane S. Alas! at Antwerp! O forgive my tears!
(Weeping.)

They fall for my offences—and must fall
Long, long ere they shall wash my stains away.
You knew perhaps—O grief! O shame!—my husband.

Dum. I knew him well—but stay this flood of
anguish.

The senseless grave feels not your pious sorrows:
Three years and more are past, since I was bid,
With many of our common friends, to wait him
To his last peaceful mansion. I attended,
Sprinkled his clay-cold corse with holy drops,
According to our church's rev'rend rite,
And saw him laid, in hallow'd ground, to rest.

Jane S. Oh that my soul had known no joy but him!
That I had liv'd within his guiltless arms,
And dying slept in innocence beside him!
But now his honest dust abhors the fellowship,
And scorns to mix with mine.

Enter a SERVANT, L.H.

Ser. The lady Alicia
Attends your leisure.

Jane S. Say I wish to see her. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*]
Please, gentle sir, one moment to retire,
I'll wait you on the instant, and inform you'

Of each unhappy circumstance, in which
Your friendly aid and counsel much may stead me.
[*Bel. and Dum. cross and exeunt, R.H.*

Enter ALICIA, L.H.

Alic. Still my fair friend, still shall I find you thus?
Still shall these sighs heave after one another,
These trickling drops chase one another still,
As if the posting messengers of grief
Could overtake the hours fled far away,
And make old time come back?

Jane S. No, my Alicia,
Heaven and his saints be witness to my thoughts,
There is no hour of all my life o'er past,
That I could wish should take its turn again.

Alic. And yet some of those days my friend has
known,
Some of those years might pass for golden ones,
At least if womankind can judge of happiness.
What could we wish, we who delight in empire,
Whose beauty is our sov'reign good, and gives us,
Our reasons to rebel, and pow'r to reign,
What could we more than to behold a monarch,
Lovely, renown'd, a conqueror, and young,
Bound in our chains, and sighing at our feet?

Jane S. 'Tis true, the royal Edward was a wonder,
The goodly pride of all our English youth;
He was the very joy of all that saw him.
Form'd to delight, to love, and to persuade.
But what had I to do with kings and courts?
My humble lot had cast me far beneath him;
And that he was the first of all mankind,
'The bravest, and most lovely was my curse.

Alic. Sure something more than fortune join'd your
loves:
Nor could his greatness, and his gracious form,
Be elsewhere match'd so well, as to the sweetness
And beauty of my friend.

Jane S. Name him no more:
He was the bane and ruin of my peace.

**This anguish, and these tears, these are the legacies
His fatal love has left me. Thou wilt see me,
Believe me, my Alicia, thou wilt see me,
Ere yet a few short days pass o'er my head,
Abandon'd to the very utmost wretchedness.
The hand of pow'r has seiz'd almost the whole
Of what was left for needy life's support ;
Shortly thou wilt behold me poor, and kneeling
Before thy charitable door for bread.**

Alic. Joy of my life, my dearest Shore, forbear
To wound my heart with thy foreboding sorrows :
Raise thy sad soul to better hopes than these,
Lift up thy eyes, and let them shine once more,
Bright as the morning sun above the mist.
Exert thy charms, seek out the stern protector,
And sooth his savage temper with thy beauty ;
Spite of his deadly, unrelenting nature,
He shall be mov'd to pity, and redress thee.

Jane S. My form, alas ! has long forgot to please !
The scene of beauty and delight is chang'd ;
No roses bloom upon my fading cheek,
Nor laughing graces wanton in my eyes ;
But haggard grief, lean-looking, sallow care,
And pining discontent, a rueful train,
Dwell on my brow, all hideous and forlorn ;
One only shadow of a hope is left me ;
The noble-minded Hastings, of his goodness,
Has kindly underta'en to be my advocate,
And move my humble suit to angry Gloster.

Alic. Does Hastings undertake to plead your cause ?
But wherefore should he not ? Hastings has eyes :
The gentle lord has a right tender heart,
Melting and easy, yielding to impression,
And catching the soft flame from each new beauty ;
But yours shall charm him long.

Jane S. Away, you flatterer ! *(Crosses to R.H.)*
Nor charge his gen'rous meaning with a weakness,
Which his great soul and virtue must disdain.
Too much of love thy hapless friend has prov'd,
Too many giddy, foolish hours are gone,

And in fantastic measures danc'd away :
 May the remaining few know only friendship,
 So thou, my dearest, truest, best Alicia,
 Vouchsafe to lodge me in thy gentle heart,
 A partner there ; I will give up mankind,
 Forget the transports of increasing passion,
 And all the pangs we feel for its decay.

Alic. Live ! live and reign for ever in my bosom ;
 (*Embracing.*)

Safe and unrivall'd there possess thy own ;
 And you, the brightest of the stars above,
 Ye saints that once were women here below,
 Be witness of the truth, the holy friendship,
 Which here to this my other self I vow.
 If I not hold her nearer to my soul,
 Than every other joy the world can give,
 Let poverty, deformity, and shame,
 Distraction and despair seize me on earth,
 Let not my faithless ghost have peace hereafter,
 Nor taste the bliss of your celestial fellowship.

Jane S. Yes, thou art true, and only thou art true ;
 Therefore these jewels, once the lavish bounty
 Of royal Edward's love, I trust to thee ;
 (*Giving a Casket.*)

Receive this, all that I can call my own,
 And let it rest unknown, and safe with thee :
 That if the state's injustice should oppress me,
 Strip me of all, and turn me out a wanderer,
 My wretchedness may find relief from thee,
 And shelter from the storm.

Alic. My all is thine ;
 One common hazard shall attend us both,
 And both be fortunate, or both be wretched.
 But let thy fearful doubting heart be still ;
 The saints and angels have thee in their charge,
 And all things shall be well. Think not, the good,
 The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
 Shall die forgotten all ; the poor, the pris'n'r,
 The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
 Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,

Shall cry to heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee.
 Ev'n man, the merciless insulter man,
 Man, who rejoices in our sex's weakness,
 Shall pity thee, and with unwonted goodness,
 Forget thy failings, and record thy praise.

Jane S. Why should I think that man will do for
 me,

What yet he never did for wretches like me?
 Mark by what partial justice we are judg'd;
 Such is the fate unhappy women find,
 And such the curse entail'd upon our kind,
 That man, the lawless libertine, may rove,
 Free and unquestion'd through the wilds of love;
 While woman, sense and nature's easy fool,
 If poor, weak woman swerve from virtue's rule;
 If, strongly charm'd, she leave the thorny way,
 And in the softer paths of pleasure stray,
 Ruin ensues, reproach and endless shame,
 And one false step entirely damns her fame;

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

In vain with tears the loss she may deplore,
 In vain look back on what she was before;
 She sets, like stars that fall, to rise no more.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in Jane Shore's House.*

Enter ALICIA, R.H.

The drowsy night grows on the world, and now
 The busy craftsmen and the o'er-labour'd hind
 Forget the travail of the day in sleep:
 Care only wakes, and moping pensiveness;

With meagre discontented looks they sit,
 And watch the wasting of the midnight taper.
 Such vigils must I keep, so wakes my soul,
 Restless and self-tormented ! O false Hastings !
 Thou hast destroy'd my peace.

(*Knocking without, L.H.*)

What noise is that ?

What visitor is this, who with bold freedom,
 Breaks in upon the peaceful night and rest,
 With such a rude approach ?

Enter a SERVANT, L.H.

Serv. One from the court.

Lord Hastings (as I think), demands my lady.

[*Crosses behind, and Exit, R.H.*]

Alic. Hastings ! Be still, my heart, and try to meet
 him,

With his own arts ! with falsehood—But he comes.

*Enter LORD HASTINGS, speaking to a Servant as
 entering, L.H.*

Has. Dismiss my train, and wait alone without.
 Alicia here ! Unfortunate encounter
 But be it as it may.

Alic. When humbly, thus,
 The great descend to visit the afflicted,
 When thus, unmindful of their rest, they come
 To sooth the sorrows of the midnight mourner,
 Comfort comes with them ; like the golden sun,
 Dispers the sullen shades with her sweet influence,
 And cheers the melancholy house of care.

Has. 'Tis true I would not over-rate a courtesy,
 Nor let the coldness of delay hang on it,
 To nip and blast its favour, like a frost ;
 But rather chose, at this late hour, to come,
 That your fair friend may know I have prevail'd ;
 The lord protector has receiv'd her suit,
 And means to show her grace.

Alic. My friend ! my lord.

Has. Yes, lady, yours ; none has a right more ample

To task my pow'r than you.

Alic. I want the words,

To pay you back a compliment so courtly ;
But my heart guesses at the friendly meaning,
And wou'dn't die your debtor.

Has. 'Tis well, madam.

But I would see your friend.

Alic. O thou false lord !

I would be mistress of my heaving heart,
Stifle this rising rage, and learn from thee
To dress my face in easy, dull indiff'rence ;
But 'twou'dn't be ; my wrongs will tear their way,
And rush at once upon thee. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Has. Are you wise ?

Have you the use of reason ? Do you wake ?
What means this raving, this transporting passion ?

Alic. O thou cool traitor ! thou insulting tyrant !
Dost thou behold my poor, distracted heart,
Thus rent with agonizing love and rage,
And ask me what it means ? Art thou not false ?
Am I not scorn'd, forsaken, and abandon'd ;
Left, like a common wretch, to shame and infamy ;
Giv'n up to be the sport of villains' tongues,
Of laughing parasites, and lewd buffoons ?
And all because my soul has doated on thee
With love, with truth, and tenderness unutterable !

Has. Are these the proofs of tenderness and love ?
These endless quarrels, discontents, and jealousies,
These never-ceasing wailings and complainings,
These furious starts, these whirlwinds of the soul,
Which every other moment rise to madness ?

Alic. What proof, alas ! have I not giv'n of love ?
What have I not abandon'd to thy arms ?
Have I not set at nought my noble birth,
A spotless fame, and an unblemish'd race,
The peace of innocence, and pride of virtue ?
My prodigality has giv'n thee all ;

And now, I've nothing left me to bestow,
You hate the wretched bankrupt you have made.

(Crosses to R.H.)

Has. Why am I thus pursu'd from place to place,
Kept in the view, and cross'd at ev'ry turn?
In vain I fly, and, like a hunted deer,
Scud o'er the lawns, and hasten to the covert;
E'er I can reach my safety, you o'ertake me
With the swift malice of some keen reproach,
And drive the winged shaft deep in my heart.

Alic. Hither you fly, and here you seek repose;
Spite of the poor deceit, your arts are known,
Your pious, charitable, midnight visits.

Has. If you are wise, and prize your peace of mind,
Yet take the friendly counsel of my love;
Believe me true, nor listen to your jealousy.
Let not that devil, which undoes your sex,
That cursed curiosity seduce you,
To hunt for needless secrets, which, neglected,
Shall never hurt your quiet; but once known,
Shall sit upon your heart, pinch it with pain,
And banish the sweet sleep for ever from you.
Go to—be yet advis'd—

Alic. Dost thou in scorn
Preach patience to my rage, and bid me tamely
Sit like a poor, contented idiot down,
Nor dare to think thou'st wrong'd me? Ruin seize
thee,
And swift perdition overtake thy treachery.
Have I the least remaining cause to doubt?
Hast thou endeavour'd once to hide thy falsehood?
To hide it might have spoke some little tenderness,
And shown thee half unwilling to undo me:
But thou disdain'st the weakness of humanity.
Thy words, and all thy actions, have confess'd it;
Ev'n now thy eyes avow it, now they speak,
And insolently own the glorious villany.

Has. Well then, I own my heart has broke your
chains.
Patient I bore the painful bondage long,

At length my gen'rous love disdains your tyranny ;
 The bitterness and stings of taunting jealousy,
 Vexatious days, and jarring, joyless nights,
 Have driv'n him forth to seek some safer shelter,
 Where he may rest his weary wings in peace.

Alic. You triumph ! do ! and with gigantic pride
 Defy impending vengeance. Heav'n shall wink ;
 No more his arm shall roll the dreadful thunder,
 Nor send his lightnings forth : no more his justice
 Shall visit the presuming sons of men,
 But perjury, like thine, shall dwell in safety.

Has. Whate'er my fate decrees for me hereafter,
 Be present to me now, my better angel !
 Preserve me from the storm that threatens now,
 And if I have beyond atonement sinn'd,
 Let any other kind of plague o'ertake me,
 So I escape the fury of that tongue.

Alic. Thy prayer is heard—I go (*Crosses to L.H.*)
 —but know, proud lord,
 Howe'er thou scorn'st the weakness of my sex,
 This feeble hand may find the means to reach thee,
 Howe'er sublime in pow'r and greatness plac'd,
 With royal favour guarded round and grac'd ;
 On eagle's wings my rage shall urge her flight,
 And hurl thee headlong from thy topmast height ;
 Then, like thy fate, superior will I sit,
 And view thee fall'n, and grov'ling at my feet ;
 See thy last breath with indignation go,
 And tread thee sinking to the shades below.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Has. How fierce a fiend is passion ! With what
 wildness,
 What tyranny untam'd it reigns in woman !
 Unhappy sex ! whose easy, yielding temper
 Gives way to ev'ry appetite alike :
 And love in their weak bosoms is a rage
 As terrible as hate, and as destructive.
 But soft ye now—for here comes one, disclaims
 Strife and her wrangling train ; of equal elements,

Without one jarring atom was she form'd,
And gentleness and joy make up her being.

Enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Forgive me, fair one, if officious friendship
Intrudes on your repose, and comes thus late
To greet you with the tidings of success.
The princely Gloster has vouchsaf'd your hearing,
To-morrow he expects you at the court ;
There plead your cause, with never-failing beauty,
Speak all your griefs, and find a full redress.

Jane S. Thus humbly let your lowly servant bend.

(Kneeling.)

Thus let me bow my grateful knee to earth,
And bless your noble nature for this goodness.

Has. Rise, gentle dame, you wrong my meaning
much,

Think me not guilty of a thought so vain,
To sell my courtesy for thanks like these.

Jane S. 'Tis true, your bounty is beyond my
speaking :

But though my mouth be dumb, my heart shall thank
you ;

And when it melts before the throne of mercy,
Mourning and bleeding for my past offences,
My fervent soul shall breathe one pray'r for you,
That heav'n will pay you back, when most you need,
'The grace and goodness you have shown to me.

Has. If there be aught of merit in my service,
Impute it there, where most 'tis due,—to love ;
Be kind, my gentle mistress, to my wishes,
And satisfy my panting heart with beauty.

Jane S. Alas ! my lord—

Has. Why bend thy eyes to earth ?
Wherefore these looks of heaviness and sorrow ?
Why breathes that sigh, my love ? And wherefore
falls
This trickling show'r of tears, to stain thy sweet-
ness ?

Jane S. If pity dwells within your noble breast
(As sure it does), oh, speak not to me thus.

Has. Can I behold thee, and not speak of love?
Ev'n now, thus sadly as thou stand'st before me,
Thus desolate, dejected, and forlorn,
Thy softness steals upon my yielding senses,
Till my soul faints, and sickens with desire;
How canst thou give this motion to my heart,
And bid my tongue be still?

Jane S. Cast round your eyes
Upon the high-born beauties of the court;
Behold, like opening roses, where thy bloom,
Sweet to the sense, unsully'd all, and spotless;
There choose some worthy partner of your heart,
To fill your arms and bless your virtuous bed;
Nor turn your eyes this way.

Has. What means this peevish, this fantastic
change?
Where is thy wonted pleasantness of face,
Thy wonted graces, and thy dimpled smiles?
Where hast thou lost thy wit and sportive mirth?
That cheerful heart, which us'd to dance for ever,
And cast a day of gladness all around thee?

Jane S. Yes, I will own I merit the reproach;
And for those foolish days of wanton pride,
My soul is justly humbled to the dust:
All tongues, like yours, are licens'd to upbraid me,
Still to repeat my guilt, to urge my infamy,
And treat me like that abject thing I have been.

Has. No more of this dull stuff. 'Tis time enough
To whine and mortify thyself with penance,
The present moment claims more gen'rous use;
Thy beauty, night and solitude reproach me,
For having talk'd thus long:—come let me press thee,
(*Laying hold on her.*)

Jane S. Forbear, my lord!—here let me rather die,
(*Kneeling.*)
And end my sorrows and my shame for ever.

Has. Away with this perverseness;—'tis too much.

Nay, if you strive,—'tis monstrous affectation!
(*Striving.*)

Jane S. Retire! I beg you leave me—

Has. Thus to coy it!—

With one who knows you too.—

Jane S. For mercy's sake—

Has. Ungrateful woman! Is it thus you pay
My services?—

Jane S. Abandon me to ruin,—
Rather than urge me—

Has. This way to your chamber; (*Pulling her.*)
There if you struggle—

Jane S. Help, O gracious heaven!
Help! Save me! Help! [*Rushes out, R.H.*]

Enter DUMONT, R.H.; he interposes.

Dum. My lord! for honour's sake—

Has. Hah! What art thou?—Be gone!

Dum. My duty calls me
To my attendance on my mistress here.

Has. Avaunt! base groom:—
At distance wait and know thy office better.

Dum. No, my lord—
The common ties of manhood call me now,
And bid me thus stand up in the defence
Of an oppress'd, unhappy, helpless woman.

Has. And dost thou know me, slave?

Dum. Yes, thou proud lord!
I know thee well; know thee with each advantage
Which wealth, or pow'r, or noble birth can give thee.
I know thee too for one who stains those honours,
And blots a long illustrious line of ancestry,
By poorly daring thus to wrong a woman.

Has. 'Tis wondrous well; I see, my saint-like dame,
You stand provided of your braves and ruffians,
'To man your cause, and bluster in your brothel.

Dum. Take back the foul reproach, unmanner'd
railer!
Nor urge my rage too far, lest thou shouldst find

I have as daring spirits in my blood
 As thou or any of thy race e'er boasted ;
 And though no gaudy titles grac'd my birth,
 Yet heav'n that made me honest, made me more
 Than ever king did, when he made a lord.

Has. Insolent villain ! henceforth let this teach
 thee *(Draws and strikes him.)*

The distance 'twixt a peasant and a prince.

Dum. Nay then, my lord, *(Drawing.)* learn you by
 this, how well

An arm resolv'd can guard its master's life.

(They fight ; Dumont disarms Hastings.)

Has. Confusion ! baffled by a base-horn hind !

Dum. Now, haughty sir, where is our difference
 now ?

Your life is in my hand, and did not honour,
 The gentleness of blood, and inborn virtue
 (Howe'er unworthy I may seem to you,)
 Plead in my bosom, I should take the forfeit.
 But wear your sword again ; and know, a lord
 Oppos'd against a man, is but a man.

Has. Curse on my failing hand ! your better fortune
 Has giv'n you vantage o'er me ; but perhaps
 Your triumph may be bought with dear repentance.

[Exit, L.H.]

Re-enter JANE SHORE, R.H.

Jane S. Alas ! what have you done ? Know ye the
 pow'r,
 The mightiness that waits upon this lord ?

Dum. Fear not, my worthiest mistress ; 'tis a cause
 In which heaven's guards shall wait you. O pursue,
 Pursue the sacred counsels of your soul,
 Which urge you on to virtue ;
 Assisting angels shall conduct your steps,
 Bring you to bliss, and crown your days with peace.

Jane S. O that my head were laid, my sad eyes
 clos'd,
 And my cold corse wound in my shroud to rest !

My painful heart will never cease to beat,
Will never know a moment's peace till then.

Dum. Would you be happy, leave this fatal place;
Fly from the court's pernicious neighbourhood;
Where innocence is sham'd, and blushing modesty
Is made the scorner's jest; where hate, deceit,
And deadly ruin, wear the masks of beauty,
And draw deluded fools with shows of pleasure.

Jane S. Where should I fly, thus helpless and forlorn,
Of friends, and all the means of life bereft?

Dum. Belmour, whose friendly care still wakes to
serve you,
Has found you out a little peaceful refuge,
Far from the court and the tumultuous city.
Within an ancient forest's ample verge,
There stands a lonely but a healthful dwelling,
Built for convenience and the use of life:
Around it fallows, meads, and pastures fair,
A little garden, and a limpid brook,
By nature's own contrivance seem'd dispos'd;
No neighbours, but a few poor simple clowns,
Honest and true, with a well meaning priest:
No faction, or domestic fury's rage,
Did e'er disturb the quiet of that place,
When the contending nobles shook the land
With York and Lancaster's disputed sway.
Your virtue there may find a safe retreat
From the insulting pow'rs of wicked greatness.

Jane S. Can there be so much happiness in store?
A cell like that is all my hopes aspire to.
Haste then, and thither let us take our flight,
E'er the clouds gather, and the wintry sky
Descends in storms to intercept our passage.

Dum. Will you then go? You glad my very soul.
Banish your fears, cast all your cares on me;
Plenty and ease, and peace of mind shall wait you,
And make your latter days of life most happy.
O lady! but I must not, cannot tell you,
How anxious I have been for all your dangers,

And how my heart rejoices at your safety.
 So when the spring renews the flow'ry field,
 And warns the pregnant nightingale to build,
 She seeks the safest shelter of the wood,
 Where she may trust her little tuneful brood ;
 Where no rude swains her shady cell may know,
 No serpents climb, nor blasting winds may blow ;
 Fond of the chosen place, she views it o'er,
 Sits there, and wanders through the grove no more ;
 Warbling she charms it each returning night,
 And loves it with a mother's dear delight.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Court.*

Enter ALICIA, with a Paper, R.H.

Alic. This paper to the great protector's hand
 With care and secrecy must be convey'd :
 His bold ambition now avows its aim,
 To pluck the crown from Edward's infant brow,
 And fix it on his own. I know he holds
 My faithless Hastings adverse to his hopes,
 And much devoted to the orphan king :
 On that I build ; this paper meets his doubts,
 And marks my hated rival as the cause
 Of Hastings' zeal for his dead master's sons.
 Oh, jealousy ! thou bane of pleasing friendship,
 How does thy rancour poison all our softness,
 And turn our gentle nature's into bitterness !
 See, where she comes ! once my heart's dearest blessing,
 Now my chang'd eyes are blasted with her beauty,
~~And~~ that known face, and sicken to behold he

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.

Jane S. O my Alicia !

Alic. What new grief is this ?

What unforeseen misfortune has surpris'd thee,
That racks thy tender heart thus ?

Jane S. O Dumont !

Alic. Say, what of him ?

Jane S. That friendly, honest man,
Whom Belmour brought of late to my assistance,
On whose kind care, whose diligence and faith,
My surest trust was built, this very morn
Was seiz'd on by the cruel hand of power,
Forc'd from my house, and borne away to prison.

Alic. To prison, said you ? Can you guess the
cause ?

Jane S. Too well, I fear. His bold defence of me
Has drawn the vengeance of lord Hastings on him.

Alic. Lord Hastings ! ha !

Jane S. Some fitter time must tell thee
The tale of my hard hap. Upon the present
Hang all my poor, my last remaining hopes.
Within this paper is my suit contain'd ;
Here as the princely Gloster passes forth,
I wait to give it on my humble knees,
And move him for redress.

*(She gives the paper to Alicia, who opens and seems
to read it ; Jane Shore retires up the Stage.)*

Alic. Now for a wile,
To sting my thoughtless rival to the heart ;
To blast her fatal beauties, and divide her
For ever from my perjur'd Hastings' eyes :
Their fashions are the same, it cannot fail.

(Aside.—Pulling out the other Paper.)

Jane S. (Advancing.) But see the great protector
comes this way.
Give me the paper, friend.

Alic. For love and vengeance !

(Aside.—She gives her the other Paper.)

Enter the DUKE of GLOSTER, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFF, CATESBY, Courtiers, and other Attendants, R.H. U.E.

Jane S. (Kneeling, R.H.) O noble Gloster, turn thy gracious eye,
Incline thy pitying ear to my complaint ;
A poor, undone, forsaken, helpless woman,
Entreats a little bread for charity,
To feed her wants, and save her life from perishing.

Glos. Arise fair dame, and dry your wat'ry eyes.
(Receiving the Paper, and raising her.)

Beshrew me, but 'twere pity of his heart
That could refuse a boon to such a suitor.
You've got a noble friend to be your advocate :
A worthy and right gentle lord he is,
And to his trust most true. This present now
Some matters of the state detain our leisure ;
Those once dispatch'd, we'll call for you anon,
And give your griefs redress. Go to !—be comforted.

Jane S. Good heavens repay your highness for this pity,
And show'r down blessings on your princely head !
Come, my Alicia, reach thy friendly arm,
And help me to support this feeble frame,
That nodding totters with oppressive woe,
And sinks beneath its load.

[Exeunt Jane S. and Alic. R.H.]

Glos. Now by my holidame !
Heavy of heart she seems, and sore afflicted.
But thus it is when rude calamity
Lays its strong gripe upon these mincing minions ;
The dainty gew-gaw forms dissolve at once,
And shiver at the shock. What says this paper ?
(Seeming to read.)

Ha ! What is this ? Come nearer, Ratcliffe ! Catesby !
Mark the contents, and then divine the meaning.

(He reads.)

Her not, Princely Gloster, at the notice

*This paper brings you from a friend unknown ;
 Lord Hastings is inclined to call you master,
 And kneel to Richard as to England's king ;
 But Shore's bewitching wife misleads his heart,
 And draws his service to king Edward's sons :
 Drive her away, you break the charm that holds him,
 And he, and all his powers, attend on you.*

Sir R. (R.H.) 'Tis wonderful !

Cates. (L.H.) The means by which it came
 Yet stranger too !

Glos. You saw it giv'n, but now.

Sir R. She could not know the purport.

Glos. No, 'tis plain

She knows it not, it levels at her life ;
 Should she presume to prate of such high matters,
 The meddling harlot, dear she should abide it.

Cates. What hand soe'er it comes from, be assur'd,
 It means your highness well—

Glos. Upon the instant,
 Lord Hastings will be here ; this morn I mean
 To prove him to the quick ; then if he flinch,
 No more but this,—away with him at once,
 He must be mine or nothing.—But he comes !
 Draw nearer this way, and observe me well.

(They whisper.)

Enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. This foolish woman hangs about my heart,
 Lingers and wanders in my fancy still ;
 This coyness is put on, 'tis art and cunning,
 And worn to urge desire ;—I must possess her.
 The groom, who lift his saucy hand against me,
 Ere this, is humbled, and repents his daring.
 Perhaps, ev'n she may profit by th' example,
 And teach her beauty not to scorn my pow'r.

Glos. This do, and wait me e'er the council sits.

[Exeunt Ratcliffe and Catesby, R.H. U.H.]

My lord, you're well encounter'd ; here has been
 A fair petitioner this morning with us ;

Believe me, she has won me much to pity her :
 Alas ! her gentle nature was not made
 To buffet with adversity. I told her
 How worthily her cause you had befriended ;
 How much for your good sake we meant to do,
 That you had spoke, and all things should be well.

Has. Your highness binds me ever to your service.

Glos. You know your friendship is most potent with
 us,

And shares our power. But of this enough,
 For we have other matters for your ear ;
 The state is out of tune : distracting fears,
 And jealous doubts, jar in our public councils ;
 Amidst the wealthy city, murmurs rise,
 Lewd railings, and reproach on those that rule,
 With open scorn of govenment ; hence credit,
 And public trust 'twixt man and man, are broke.
 The golden streams of commerce are withheld,
 Which fed the wants of needy hinds and artizans,
 Who therefore curse the great, and threat rebellion.

Has. The resty knaves are over-run with ease,
 As plenty ever is the nurse of faction ;
 If in good days, like these, the headstrong herd
 Grow madly wanton and repine, it is
 Because the reins of power are held too slack,
 And reverend authority of late
 Has worn a face of mercy more than justice.

Glos. Beshrew my heart ! but you have well divin'd
 The source of these disorders. Who can wonder
 If riot and misrule o'erturn the realm,
 When the crown sits upon a baby brow ?
 Plainly to speak, hence comes the gen'ral cry,
 And sum of all complaint : 'twill ne'er be well
 With England (thus they talk,) while children govern.

Has. 'Tis true, the king is young : but what of
 that ?

We feel no want of Edward's riper years,
 While Gloster's valour and most princely wisdom
 ll support our infant sov'reign's place,
 th's support, and guardian to his throne.

Glos. The council (much I'm bound to thank 'em
for't,)

Have plac'd a pageant sceptre in my hand,
Barren of pow'r, and subject to controul;
Scorn'd by my foes, and useless to my friends.
Oh, worthy lord! were mine the rule indeed,
I think I should not suffer rank offence
At large to lord it in the commonweal;
Nor would the realm be rent by discord thus,
Thus fear and doubt, betwixt disputed titles.

Has. Of this I am to learn; as not supposing
A doubt like this;—

Glos. Ay, marry, but there is—
And that of much concern. Have you not heard
How, on a late occasion, doctor Shaw
Has mov'd the people much about the lawfulness
Of Edward's issue? By right grave authority
Of learning and religion, plainly proving,
A bastard scion never should be grafted
Upon a royal stock; from thence at full
Discoursing on my brother's former contract
To lady Elizabeth Lucy, long before
His jolly match with that same buxom widow,
The queen he left behind him—

Has. Ill befall
Such meddling priests, who kindle up confusion,
And vex the quiet world with their vain scruples!
By heav'n 'tis done in perfect spite to peace.
Did not the king
Our royal master, Edward, in concurrence
With his estates assembled, well determine
What course the sov'reign rule should take hencefor-
ward?

When shall the deadly hate of faction cease?
When shall our long-divided land have rest,
If every peevish, moody malcontent,
Shall set the senseless rabble in an uproar,
Fright them with dangers, and perplex their brains,
Each day with some fantastic giddy change?

Glos. What if some patriot, for the public good,

Should vary from your scheme, new-mould the state?

Has. Curse on the innovating hand attempts it !

Remember him, the villain, righteous heaven,
In thy great day of vengeance ! blast the traitor
And his pernicious counsels ; who, for wealth,
For pow'r, the pride of greatness, or revenge,
Would plunge his native land in civil wars !

Glos. You go too far, my lord.

Has. Your highness' pardon.—

Have we so soon forgot those days of ruin,
When York and Lancaster drew forth their battles ;
When, like a matron butcher'd by her sons,
Our groaning country bled at every vein :
When murders, rapes, and massacres prevail'd ;
When churches, palaces, and cities blaz'd ;
When insolence and barbarism triumph'd,
And swept away distinction : peasants trod
Upon the necks of nobles : low were laid
The reverend crosier and the holy mitre,
And desolation covered all the land ;
Who can remember this, and not, like me,
Here vow to sheath a dagger in his heart,
Whose damn'd ambition would renew those horrors,
And set once more that scene of blood before us ?

Glos. How now ! so hot !

Has. So brave, and so resolv'd.

Glos. Is then our friendship of so little moment,
That you could arm your hand against my life ?

Has. I hope your highness does not think I mean
it ;

No, heav'n forbend that e'er your princely person
Should come within the scope of my resentment.

Glos. O noble Hastings ! nay, I must embrace you ;
(*Embraces him.*)

By holy Paul, you're a right honest man !

The time is full of danger and distrust,
And warns us to be wary. Hold me not

Too apt for jealousy and light surmise,

When I meant to lodge you next my heart,
Your truth to trial. Keep your loyalty,

And live your king and country's best support:
 For me, I ask no more than honour gives,
 To think me yours, and rank me with your friends.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Has. I am not read,
 Nor skill'd and practis'd in the arts of greatness,
 To kindle thus, and give a scope to passion.
 The duke is surely noble; but he touch'd me
 Ev'n on the tend'rest point; the master-string
 That makes most harmony or discord to me.
 I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
 And my soul's darling passion stands confess'd;
 Beyond or love's or friendship's sacred band,
 Beyond myself, I prize my native land:
 On this foundation would I build my fame,
 And emulate the Greek and Roman name;
 Think England's peace bought cheaply with my blood,
 And die with pleasure for my country's good.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The same.*

*Enter DUKE of GLOSTER, (In Centre.) RATCLIFFE,
 R.H. and CATESBY, L.H.*

Glos. This was the sum of all: that he would
 brook
 No alteration in the present state.
 Marry, at last, the testy gentleman
 Was almost mov'd to bid us hold defiance:
 But there I dropp'd the argument, and changing
 The first design and purport of my speech,
 I prais'd his good affection to young Edward,
 And left him to believe my thoughts like his.

Proceed we then in this fore-mentioned matter,
As nothing bound or trusting to his friendship.

Sir R. Ill does it thus befall. I could have wish'd
This lord had stood with us.

His name had been of 'vantage to your highness,
And stood our present purpose much in stead.

Glos. This wayward and perverse declining from us,
Has warrant'd at full the friendly notice,
Which we this morn receiv'd. I hold it certain,
This puling, whining harlot rules his reason,
And prompts his zeal for Edward's bastard brood.

Cates. If she have such dominion o'er his heart,
And turn it at her will, you rule her fate ;
And should, by inference and apt deduction,
Be arbiter of his. Is not her bread,
The very means immediate to her being,
The bounty of your hand ? Why does she live,
If not to yield obedience to your pleasure,
To speak, to act, to think as you command !

Sir R. Let her instruct her tongue to bear your
message !

Teach every grace to smile in your behalf,
And her deluded eyes to gloat for you ;
His ductile reason will be wound about,
Be led and turn'd again, say and unsay,
Receive the yoke, and yield exact obedience.

Glos. Your counsel likes me well, it shall be follow'd,
She waits without attending, on her suit,
Go, call her in, and leave us here alone.

[*Exeunt Ratcliffe and Cateshy, L.H.*]

How poor a thing is he, how worthy scorn,
Who leaves the guidance of imperial manhood
To such a paltry piece of stuff as this is !
A moppet made of prettiness and pride ;
That oftener does her giddy fancies change,
Than glittering dew-drops in the sun do colours.—
Now, shame upon it ! was our reason given
For such a use ? To be thus puff'd about.
Sure there is something more than witchcraft in them,
Ters ev'n the wisest of us all.

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.

Oh! you are come most fitly. We have ponder'd
On this your grievance: and though some there are,
Nay, and those great ones too, who would enforce
The rigour of our power to afflict you,
And bear a heavy hand; yet fear not you:
We've ta'en you to our favour; our protection
Shall stand between, and shield you from mishap.

Jane S. The blessings of a heart with anguish
broken

And rescu'd from despair, attend your highness.
Alas! my gracious lord, what have I done
To kindle such relentless wrath against me?

Glos. Marry, there are, though I believe them not,
Who say you meddle in affairs of state:
That you presume to prattle like a busy-body,
Give your advice, and teach the lords o'the council
What fits the order of the commonweal.

Jane S. Oh, that the busy world, at least in this,
Would take example from a wretch like me!
None then would waste their hours in foreign thoughts,
Forget themselves, and what concerns their peace,
To search, with prying eyes, for faults abroad,
If all, like me, consider'd their own hearts,
And wept their sorrows which they found at home.

Glos. Go to; I know your pow'r; and though I
trust not

To ev'ry breath of fame, I'm not to learn
That Hastings is profess'd your loving vassal.
But fair befall your beauty: use it wisely,
And it may stand your fortunes much in stead,
Give back your forfeit land with large increase,
And place you high in safety and in honour.
Nay, I could point a way, the which pursuing,
You shall not only bring yourself advantage,
But give the realm much worthy cause to thank you.

Jane S. Oh! where or how—can my unworthy
hand

Become an instrument of good to any?
 Instruct your lowly slave, and let me fly
 To yield obedience to your dread command.

Glos. Why, that's well said;—Thus then,—observe
 me well.

The state, for many high and potent reasons,
 Deeming my brother Edward's sons unfit
 For the imperial weight of England's crown—

Jane S. Alas! for pity.

Glos. Therefore have resolv'd
 To set aside their unavailing infancy,
 And vest the sov'reign rule in abler hands.
 This, though of great importance to the public,
 Hastings, for very pceevishness and spleen,
 Does stubbornly oppose.

Jane S. Does he? Does Hastings?

Glos. Ay, Hastings.

Jane S. Reward him for the noble deed, just
 heav'ns:

For this one action guard him and distinguish him
 With signal mercies, and with great deliverance,
 Save him from wrong, adversity, and shame,
 Let never fading honours flourish round him,
 And consecrate his name, ev'n to time's end.

Glos. How now!

Jane S. The poor, forsaken, royal little ones!
 Shall they be left a prey to savage power?
 Can they lift up their harmless hands in vain,
 Or cry to heaven for help, and not be heard?
 Impossible! O gallant, generous Hastings,
 Go on, pursue, assert the sacred cause:
 Stand forth, thou proxy of all-ruling Providence,
 And save the friendless infants from oppression.
 Saints shall assist thee with prevailing prayers,
 And warring angels combat on thy side.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Glos. You're passing rich in this same heav'nly
 speech,
 And spend it at your pleasure. Nay, but mark me!
 —our is not bought with words like these.

Go to :—you'll teach your tongue another tale.

Jane S. No, though the royal Edward has undone me,

He was my king, my gracious master still ;
 He lov'd me too, though 'twas a guilty flame ;
 And can I ?—O my heart abhors the thought !
 Stand by and see his children robb'd of right ?

Glos. Dare not, ev'n for thy soul, to thwart me further !

None of your arts, your feigning, and your foolery ;
 Your dainty squeamish coying it to me ;
 Go—to your lord, your paramour, be gone !
 Lisp in his ear, hang wanton on his neck,
 And play your monkey gambols o'er to him.
 You know my purpose, look that you pursue it,
 And make him yield obedience to my will,
 Do it,—or woe upon the harlot's head.

Jane S. Oh that my tongue had every grace of speech,

Great and commanding, as the breath of kings ;
 That I had art and eloquence divine,
 To pay my duty to my master's ashes,
 And plead, till death, the cause of injur'd innocence.

Glos. Ha ! Dost thou brave me, minion ! Dost thou know

How vile, how very a wretch, my pow'r can make thee ?

That I can place thee in such abject state,
 As help shall never find thee ; where, repining,
 Thou shalt sit down, and gnaw the earth for anguish ;
 Groan to the pitiless winds without return ;
 Howl, like the midnight wolf amidst the desert,
 And curse thy life, in bitterness and misery !

Jane S. Let me be branded for the public scorn,
 Turn'd forth and driv'n to wander like a vagabond,
 Be friendless and forsaken, seek my bread
 Upon the barren wild and desolate waste.
 Feed on my sighs, and drink my falling tears,
 E'er I consent to teach my lips injustice,
 Or wrong the orphan, who has none to save him.

Glos. 'Tis well :—we'll try the temper of your heart.
What, ho! Who waits without?

Enter RATCLIFFE, CATESBY, and Attendants, L.H.

Glos. Go, some of you, and turn this strumpet
forth!

Spurn her into the street; there let her perish,
And rot upon a dunghill. Through the city
See it proclaim'd, that none, on pain of death,
Presume to give her comfort, food, or harbour;
Who ministers the smallest comfort, dies.
Her house, her costly furniture and wealth,
We seize on, for the profit of the state.
Away! Be gone!

Jane S. Oh, thou most righteous Judge—
Humbly behold, I bow myself to thee, (*Kneels.*)
And own thy justice in this hard decree:
No longer, then, my ripe offences spare,
But what I merit, let me learn to bear.
Yet, since 'tis all my wretchedness can give,
For my past crimes my forfeit life receive;

(*They raise her.*)

No pity for my sufferings here I crave,
And only hope forgiveness in the grave.

[*Exit Jane Shore, guarded by Catesby, L.H.*

Glos. So much for this. Your project's at an end.

(*To Sir Richard.*)

This idle toy, this hilding scorns my power,
And sets us all at nought. See that a guard
Be ready at my call—

Sir R. The council waits
Upon your highness's leisure.

Glos. I'll attend them.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*The Council Chamber.*

*The DUKE of BUCKINGHAM, EARL of DERBY, BISHOP
of ELY, LORD HASTINGS, and others, discovered
in Council. The DUKE of GLOSTER enters, L.H.
and takes his Place at the upper End.*

Der. (R.H.) In happy times we are assembled
here,—

T' point the day, and fix the solemn pomp
For placing England's crown, with all due rites,
Upon our sovereign Edward's youthful brow.

Lord H (L.H.) Some busy, meddling knaves, 'tis said
• there are,

As such will still be prating, who presume
To carp and cavil at his royal right ;
Therefore, I hold it fitting, with the soonest,
T' appoint the order of the coronation :
So to approve our duty to the king,
And stay the babbling of such vain gainsayers.

Der. We all attend to know your highness' pleasure.
(*To Gloster.*)

Glos. (*In Centre.*) My lords, a set of worthy men
you are,

Prudent and just, and careful for the state ;
Therefore, to your most grave determination
I yield myself in all things ; and demand .
What punishment your wisdom shall think meet
T' inflict upon those damnable contrivers,
Who shall with potions, charms, and witching drugs,
Practise against our person and our life !

Has. So much I hold the king your highness'
debtor,

So precious are you to the commonweal,
That I presume, not only for myself,
But in behalf of these my noble brothers,
To say, whoe'er they be, they merit death.

Glos. Then judge yourselves, convince your eyes of
truth :

Behold my arm, thus blasted, dry, and wither'd,
(*Pulling up his Sleeve.*)

Shrunk like a foul abortion, and decay'd, •
Like some untimely product of the seasons,
Robb'd of its properties of strength and office.
This is the sorcery of Edward's wife,
Who, in conjunction with that harlot Shore,

And other like confederate midnight hags,
 By force of potent spells, of bloody characters,
 And conjurations horrible to hear,
 Call fiends and spectres from the yawning deep,
 And set the ministers of hell at work,
 To torture and despoil me of my life.

Has. If they have done this deed—

Glos. If they have done it!

Talk'st thou to me of ifs, audacious traitor!
 Thou art that strumpet witch's chief abettor,
 The patron and comploter of her mischiefs,
 And join'd in this contrivance for my death.
 Nay start not, lords.—What ho! a guard there, sirs!

Enter Guards, L.H.

Lord Hastings, I arrest thee of high treason.
 Seize him, and bear him instantly away.
 He sha' not live an hour. By holy Paul,
 I will not dine before his head be brought me.
 Ratcliffe, stay you, and see that it be done:
 The rest that love me, rise and follow me.

[Exeunt Gloster, R.H. the Lords following.]

Manet LORD HASTINGS, SIR RICHARD RATCLIFFE,
and Guards.

Has. What! and no more but this!—How! to
 the scaffold!

O gentle Ratcliffe! tell me, do I hold thee?
 Or if I dream, what shall I do to wake,
 To break, to struggle through this dread confusion?
 For surely death itself is not so painful
 As is this sudden horror and surprise.

Sir R. (L.H.) You heard the duke's commands to
 me were absolute.

Therefore, my lord, address you to your shrift,
 With all good speed you may. Summon your cou-
 rage,

And be yourself; for you must die this instant.

Has. Yes, Ratcliffe, I will take thy friendly counsel,
 And die as a man should ; 'tis somewhat hard,
 To call my scatter'd spirits home at once :
 But since what must be, must be ;—let necessity
 Supply the place of time and preparation,
 And arm me for the blow. 'Tis but to die,
 'Tis but to venture on the common hazard,
 Which many a time in battle I have run ;
 'Tis but to close my eyes and shut out day-light,
 To view no more the wicked ways of men,
 No longer to behold the tyrant Gloster,
 And be a weeping witness of the woes,
 The desolation, slaughter, and calamities,
 Which he shall bring on this unhappy land.

Enter ALICIA, L.H.

Alic. Stand off, and let me pass :—I will, I must
 Catch him once more in these despairing arms,
 And hold him to my heart.—O Hastings ! Hastings !

Has. Alas ! why com'st thou at this dreadful moment
 To fill me with new terrors, new distractions ;
 To turn me wild with thy distemper'd rage,
 And shock the peace of my departing soul ?
 Away ; I pr'ythee, leave me !

Alic. Stop a minute—
 Till my full griefs find passage ;—O the tyrant !
 Perdition fall on Gloster's head and mine.

Has. What means thy frantic grief ?

Alic. I cannot speak—
 But I have murder'd thee ;—Oh, I could tell thee !

Has. Speak, and give ease to thy conflicting passion !
 Be quick, nor keep me longer in suspense, '
 Time presses, and a thousand crowding thoughts
 Break in at once ! this way and that they snatch ;
 They tear my hurry'd soul : all claim attention,
 And yet not one is heard. Oh ! speak, and leave me,

For I have business would employ an age,
And but a minute's time to get it done in.

Alic. That, that's my grief ;—'tis I that urge thee on,
Thus hunt thee to the toil, sweep thee from earth,
And drive thee down this precipice of fate.

Has. Thy reason is grown wild. Could thy weak
hand

Bring on this mighty ruin ? If it could,
What have I done so grievous to thy soul,
So deadly, so beyond the reach of pardon,
That nothing but my life can make atonement ?

Alic. Thy cruel scorn hath stung me to the heart,
And set my burning bosom all in flames ;
Raving and mad I flew to my revenge,
And writ I know not what ;—told the protector,
That Shore's detested wife, by wiles, had won thee
To plot against his greatness.—He believ'd it,
(Oh, dire event of my pernicious counsel !)
And, while I meant destruction on her head,
He has turn'd it all on thine.

Has. O thou inhuman ! Turn thy eyes away,
And blast me not with their destructive beams :
Why should I curse thee with my dying breath ?
Be gone ! and let me die in peace. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Alic. Canst thou—O cruel Hastings, leave me thus ?
Hear me, I beg thee,—I conjure thee, hear me !
While with an agonizing heart, I swear,
By all the pangs I feel, by all the sorrows,
The terrors and despair thy loss shall give me,
My hate was on my rival bent alone.
Oh ! had I once divin'd, false as thou art,
A danger to thy life, I would have died,
I would have met it for thee.

Has. Now mark ! and tremble at heaven's just
award :

While thy insatiate wrath and fell revenge,
Pursu'd the innocence which never wrong'd thee,
Behold, the mischief falls on thee and me :
Remorse and heaviness of heart shall wait thee,
And everlasting anguish be thy portion :

For me, the snares of death are wound about me,
 And now, in one poor moment, I am gone.
 Oh ! if thou hast one tender thought remaining,
 Fly to thy closet, fall upon thy knees,
 And recommend my parting soul to mercy.

Alic. Oh ! yet, before I go for ever from thee,
 Turn thee in gentleness and pity to me, (*Kneeling.*)
 And, in compassion of my strong affliction,
 Say, is it possible you can forgive
 The fatal rashness of ungovern'd love ?
 For, oh ! 'tis certain, if I had not lov'd thee
 Beyond my peace, my reason, fame, and life,
 This day of horror never would have known us.

Has. Oh, rise, and let me hush thy stormy sorrows.
 (*Raising her.*)

Assuage thy tears, for I will chide no more,
 No more upbraid thee, thou unhappy fair one.
 I see the hand of heav'n is arm'd against me ;
 And, in mysterious providence, decrees
 To punish me by thy mistaken hand.
 Most righteous doom ! for, oh, while I behold thee,
 Thy wrongs rise up in terrible array,
 And charge thy ruin on me ; thy fair fame,
 Thy spotless beauty, innocence, and youth,
 Dishonour'd, blasted, and betray'd by me.

Alic. And does thy heart relent for my undoing ?
 Oh ! that inhuman Gloster could be mov'd,
 But half so easily as I can pardon !

(*Catesby enters, R.H.—Whispers Ratcliffe.*)

Has. Here, then, exchange we mutual forgiveness :
 So may the guilt of all my broken vows,
 My perjuries to thee, be all forgotten,
 As here my soul acquits thee of my death,
 As here I part without one angry thought,
 As here I leave thee with the softest tenderness,
 Mourning the chance of our disastrous loves,
 And begging heav'n to bless and to support thee.

Sir R. (L.H.) My lord, dispatch ; the duke has sent
 to chide me,
 For loitering in my duty—

Has. I obey.

Alic. Insatiate, savage monster! Is a moment
So tedious to thy malice? Oh, repay him,
Thou great avenger! Give him blood for blood:
Guilt haunt him! fiends pursue him! lightnings blast
him!

That he may know how terrible it is
To want that moment he denies thee now.

Has. This rage is all in vain, that tears thy bosom:
Retire, I beg thee;
To see thee thus, thou know'st not how it wounds
me;

Thy agonies are added to my own,
And make the burden more than I can bear.
Farewell:—good angels visit thy afflictions,
And bring thee peace and comfort from above.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Alic. Oh! stab me to the heart, some pitying hand,
Now strike me dead—

Re-enter LORD HASTINGS, L.H.

Has. One thing I had forgot;—
I charge thee, by our present common miseries;
By our past loves, if they have yet a name;
By all thy hopes of peace here and hereafter,
Let not the rancour of thy hate pursue
The innocence of thy unhappy friend;
Thou know'st who 'tis I mean; Oh! shouldst thou
wrong her,
Just heav'n shall double all thy woes upon thee,
And make 'em know no end;—remember this,
As the last warning of a dying man.
Farewell, for ever!

(*The Guards carry Hastings off, L.H.*)

Alic. For ever! Oh, for ever!
Oh, who can bear to be a wretch for ever!
My rival, too! His last thoughts hung on her,
And, as he parted, left a blessing for her;
Shall she be blest, and I be curst, for ever;

No; since her fatal beauty was the cause
 Of all my suff'rings, let her share my pains;
 Let her, like me, of ev'ry joy forlorn,
 Devote the hour when such a wretch was born;
 Cast ev'ry good, and ev'ry hope behind;
 Detest the works of nature, loathe mankind:
 Like me, with cries distracted, fill the air,
 Tear her poor bosom, rend her frantic hair,
 And prove the torments of the last despair. [*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Street.*

Enter BELMOUR and DUMONT, L.H.

Dum. You saw her, then?

Bel. I met her, as returning,
 In solemn penance from the public cross.
 Before her, certain rascal officers,
 Slaves in authority, the knaves of justice,
 Proclaim'd the tyrant Gloster's cruel orders.
 Around her, numberless, the rabble flow'd,
 Should'ring each other, crowding for a view,
 Gaping and gazing, taunting and reviling;
 Some pitying,—but those, alas! how few!
 The most, such iron hearts we are, and such
 The base barbarity of human kind,
 With insolence and lewd reproach pursu'd her,
 Hooting and railing, and with villanous hands
 Gath'ring the filth from out the common ways,
 To hurl upon her head.

Dum. Inhuman dogs!
 How did she bear it?

Bel. With the gentlest patience;
 Submissive, sad, and lowly was her look;

A burning taper in her hand she bore,
 And on her shoulders carelessly confus'd,
 With loose neglect, her lovely tresses hung;
 Upon her cheek a faintish blush was spread;
 Feeble she seem'd, and sorely smit with pain.
 While barefoot as she trod the flinty pavement,
 Her footsteps all along were mark'd with blood.
 Yet, silent still she pass'd, and unrepining;
 Her streaming eyes bent ever on the earth,
 Except when in some bitter pang of sorrow,
 To heav'n she seem'd in fervent zeal to raise,
 And beg that mercy man deny'd her here.

Dum. When was this piteous sight?

Bel. These last two days.

You know my care was wholly bent on you,
 To find the happy means of your deliverance,
 Which but for Hastings' death I had not gain'd.
 During that time, although I have not seen her,
 Yet divers trusty messengers I've sent,
 To wait about, and watch a fit convenience
 To give her some relief, but all in vain;
 A churlish guard attends upon her steps,
 Who menace those with death, that bring her comfort,
 And drive all succour from her.

Dum. Let 'em threaten;

Let proud oppression prove its fiercest malice;
 So heav'n befriend my soul, as here I vow
 To give her help, and share one fortune with her.

Bel. Mean you to see her thus, in your own form?

Dum. I do.

Bel. And have you thought upon the consequence?

Dum. What is there I should fear?

Bel. Have you examin'd

Into your inmost heart, and try'd at leisure
 The sev'ral secret springs that move the passions?
 Has mercy fix'd her empire there so sure,
 That wrath and vengeance never may return?
 Can you resume a husband's name, and bid
 That wakeful dragon, fierce resentment, sleep?

Dum. O thou hast set my busy brain at work,
 And now she musters up a train of images,
 Which, to preserve my peace, I had cast aside,
 And sunk in deep oblivion.—Oh, that form !
 That angel face on which my dotage hung !
 How I have gaz'd upon her, till my soul
 With very eagerness went forth towards her,
 And issu'd at my eyes.—Was there a gem
 Which the sun ripens in the Indian mine,
 Or the rich bosom of the ocean yields ?
 What was there art could make, or wealth could buy,
 Which I have left unsought to deck her beauty ?
 What could her king do more ?—And yet she fled.

Bel. Away with that sad fancy—

Dum. Oh, that day !

The thought of it must live for ever with me.
 I met her, Belmour, when the royal spoiler
 Bore her in triumph from my widow'd home !
 Within his chariot, by his side she sat,
 And listen'd to his talk with downward looks,
 'Till sudden as she chanc'd aside to glance,
 Her eyes encounter'd mine ;—Oh ! then, my friend !
 Oh ! who can paint my grief and her amazement !
 As at the stroke of death, twice turn'd she pale ;
 And twice a burning crimson blush'd all o'er her ;
 Then, with a shriek heart-wounding, loud she cry'd,
 While down her cheeks two gushing torrents ran
 Fast falling on her hands, which thus she wrung :—
 Mov'd at her grief, the tyrant ravisher,
 With courteous action woo'd her oft to turn ;
 Earnest he seem'd to plead, but all in vain ;
 Ev'n to the last she bent her sight towards me,
 And follow'd me,—till I had lost myself.

(Crosses to L.H.)

Bel. Alas, for pity ! Oh ! those speaking tears !
 Could they be false ? Did she not suffer with you.
 For though the king by force possess'd her person,
 Her unconsenting heart dwelt still with you ?
 If all her former woes were not enough,

Look on her now ; behold her where she wanders,
 Hunted to death, distress'd on every side,
 With no one hand to help ; and tell me then,
 If ever misery were known like hers ?

Dum. And can she bear it ? Can that delicate frame
 Endure the beating of a storm so rude ?

Can she, for whom the various seasons chang'd
 To court her appetite and crown her board,
 For whom the foreign vintages were press'd,
 For whom the merchant spread his silken stores,
 Can she—

Entreat for bread, and want the needful raiment
 To wrap her shiv'ring bosom from the weather ?
 When she was mine, no care came ever nigh her ;
 I thought the gentlest breeze that wakes the spring,
 Too rough to breathe upon her ; cheerfulness
 Danc'd all the day before her, and at night
 Soft slumbers waited on her downy pillow :—
 Now, sad and shelterless, perhaps she lies,
 Where piercing winds blow sharp, and the chill rain
 Drops from some pent-house on her wretched head,
 Drenches her locks, and kills her with the cold.
 It is too much :—hence with her past offences,
 They are aton'd at full.—Why stay we then ?
 Oh ! let us haste, my friend, and find her out.

Bel. Somewhere about this quarter of the town,
 I hear the poor abandon'd creature lingers :
 Her guard, though set with strictest watch to keep
 All food and friendship from her, yet permit her
 To wander in the streets, there choose her bed,
 And rest her head on what cold stone she pleases.

Dum. Here then let us divide ; each in his round
 To search her sorrows out ; whose hap it is
 First to behold her, this way let him lead
 Her fainting steps, and meet we here together.

[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter JANE SHORE, L.H.U.E. her Hair hanging loose on her Shoulders, and bare-footed.

Jane S. Yet, yet endure, nor murmur, O my soul !
 For are not thy transgressions great and numberless ?
 Do they not cover thee like rising floods,
 And press thee like a weight of waters down ?
 Wait then with patience, till the circling hours
 Shall bring the time of thy appointed rest,
 And lay thee down in death.
 And, hark ! methinks the roar that late pursu'd me,
 Sinks like the murmurs of a falling wind,
 And softens into silence. Does revenge
 And malice then grow weary, and forsake me ?
 My guard, too, that observ'd me still so close,
 Tire in the task of their inhuman office,
 And loiter far behind. Alas ! I faint,
 My spirits fail at once.—This is the door
 Of my Alicia ;—blessed opportunity !
 I'll steal a little succour from her goodness,
 Now while no eye observes me.

(She knocks at R.H.D.)

Enter SERVANT, R.H.D.

Is your lady,
 My gentle friend, at home ! Oh ! bring me to her.

(Going in.)

Serv. Hold, mistress, whither would you ?

(Throwing her back.)

Jane S. Do you not know me !

Serv. I know you well, and know my orders too :
 You must not enter here ;—

Jane S. Tell my Alicia,
 'Tis I would see her.

Serv. She is ill at ease,
 And will admit no visitor

Jane S. But tell her
'Tis I, her friend, the partner of her heart,
Wait at the door and beg—

Serv. 'Tis all in vain :—
Go hence and howl to those that will regard you.

[*Shuts the Door.*]

Jane S. It was not always thus : the time has been,
When this unfriendly door, that bars my passage,
Flew wide, and almost leap'd from off its hinges,
To give me entrance here : when this good house
Has pour'd forth all its dwellers to receive me ;
When my approaches made a little holiday,
And every face was dress'd in smiles to meet me :
But now 'tis otherwise ; and those who bless'd me,
Now curse me to my face. Why should I wander,
Stray further on, for I can die ev'n here ?

(*She sits down in the centre of the Stage.*)

Enter ALICIA, in disorder, R.H.D.

Alic. What wretch art thou, whose misery and base-
ness

Hangs on my door ; whose hateful whine of woe
Breaks in upon my sorrows, and distracts
My jarring senses with thy beggar's cry ?

Jane S. A very beggar, and a wretch, indeed ;
One driv'n by strong calamity to seek
For succours here : one perishing for want,
Whose hunger has not tasted food these three days ;
And humbly asks, for charity's dear sake,
A draught of water and a little bread.

Alic. And dost thou come to me, to me for bread ?
I know thee not.—Go ;—hunt for it abroad,
Where wanton hands upon the earth have scatter'd it,
Or cast it on the waters.—Mark the eagle,
And hungry vulture, where they wind the prey ;
Watch where the ravens of the valley feed,
And seek thy food with them :—I know thee not.

(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Jane S. (Rises.) And yet there was a time, when my
Alicia

Has thought unhappy Shore her dearest blessing.
And mourn'd the live-long day she pass'd without me;
Inclining fondly to me she has sworn,
She lov'd me more than all the world besides.

Alic. Ha! say'st thou!—Let me look upon thee
well ;—

'Tis true;—I know thee now;—a mischief on thee !
Thou art that fatal fair, that cursed she,
That set my brain a madd'ning. Thou hast robb'd me;
Thou hast undone me.—Murder ! O, my Hastings !
See his pale bloody head shoots glaring by me !
Avaunt ; and come not near me.—

Jane S. To thy hand
I trusted all ; gave my whole store to thee.
Nor do I ask it back ; allow me but
The smallest pittance, give me but to eat,
Lest I fall down and perish here before thee.

Alic. Nay ! tell not me ! Where is thy king, th
Edward,
And all the cringing train of courtiers,
That bent the knee before thee ?

Jane S. Oh ! for mercy !

Alic. Mercy ! I know it not !—for I am miserable.
I'll give thee misery, for here she dwells,
This is her house, where the sun never dawns,
The bird of night sits screaming o'er the roof,
Grim spectres sweep along the horrid gloom,
And nought is heard but wailings and lamentings.
Hark ! something cracks above ! it shakes ! it totters
And see the nodding ruin falls to crush me !
'Tis fall'n, 'tis here ! I felt it on my brain !
Let her take my counsel :

Why shouldst thou be a wretch ? Stab, tear thy heart
And rid thyself of this detested being ;
I wo' not linger long behind thee here.
A waving flood of bluish fire swells o'er me ;
And now 'tis out, and I am drown'd in blood.
Ha ! what art thou ! thou horrid headless trunk ?
It is my Hastings ! see he wafts me on !

Away ! I go ! I fly ! I follow thee. *((Rushes off, R.H.))*

Jane S. Alas ! she raves ; her brain I fear is turn'd,
 In mercy look upon her, gracious heav'n,
 Nor visit her for any wrong to me !
 Sure I am near upon my journey's end :
 My head runs round, my eyes begin to fail,
 And dancing shadows swim before my sight,
 I can no more ; *((Lies down.))* receive me, thou cold
 earth,
 Thou common parent, take me to thy bosom,
 And let me rest with thee.

Enter BELMOUR, R.H.U.E.

Bel. Upon the ground !
 Thy miseries can never lay thee lower.
 Look up, thou poor afflicted one ! thou mourner,
 Whom none has comforted ! Where are thy friends,
 The dear companions of thy joyful days,
 Whose hearts thy warm prosperity made glad,
 Whose arms were taught to grow like ivy round thee,
 And bind thee to their bosoms ?—Thus with thee,
 Thus let us live, and let us die, they said.
 Now where are they ?

Jane S. Ah, Belmour ! where indeed ! they stand
 aloof,
 And view my desolation from afar !
 And yet thy goodness turns aside to pity me.
 Alas ! there may be danger ; get thee gone.
 Let me not pull a ruin on thy head,
 Leave me to die alone, for I am fall'n
 Never to rise, and all relief is vain.

Bel. Yet raise thy drooping head ; for I am come
 To chase away despair. Behold ! where yonder
 That honest man, that faithful, brave Dumont,
 Is hasting to thy aid—

Jane S. Dumont ! Ha ! where !

((Raising herself, and looking about.))

Then heav'n has heard my pray'r ; his very name
 Renews the springs of life, and cheers my soul.

Has he then 'scap'd the snare ?

~~Has he~~ He has ; but see—
 es unlike the Dumont you knew,

For now he wears your better angel's form,
And comes to visit you with peace and pardon.

Enter SHORE, L.H.

Jane S. Speak, tell me ! Which is he ! and oh !
what would
This dreadful vision ! See it comes upon me—
It is my husband—Ah ! *(She swoons.)*

Shore. She faints, support her !

Bel. Her weakness could not bear the strong surprise.

But see, she stirs ! and the returning blood
Faintly begins to blush again, and kindle
Upon her ashy cheek ;—

Shore. So,—gently raise her.— *(Raising her up.)*

Jane S. Ha ! what art thou ? Belmour.

Bel. How fare you, lady ?

Jane S. My heart is thrill'd with horror,—

Bel. Be of courage ;—

Your husband lives ! 'tis he, my worthiest friend ;—

Jane S. Still art thou there ! still dost thou hover
round me !

Oh, save me, Belmour, from his angry shade !

Bel. 'Tis he himself ! he lives ! look up :—

Jane S. I dare not !

Oh ! that my eyes could shut him out for ever—

Shore. Am I so hateful then, so deadly to thee,
To blast thy eyes with horror ? Since I'm grown
A burden to the world, myself, and thee,
Would I had ne'er survived to see thee more.

Jane S. Oh ! thou most injur'd—dost thou live,
indeed ?

Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty head ;
Hide me, ye rocks, within your secret caverns ;
Cast thy black veil upon my shame, O night !
And shield me with thy sable wing for ever.,

Shore. Why dost thou turn away ?—Why tremble
thus ?

Why thus indulge thy fears, and in despair,
Abandon thy distracted soul to horror ?
Cast every black and guilty thought behind thee,

And let 'em never vex thy quiet more,
 My arms, my heart, are open to receive thee,
 To bring thee back to thy forsaken home,
 With tender joy, with fond forgiving love.—
 Let us haste.—

Now while occasion seems to smile upon us,
 Forsake this place of shame, and find a shelter.

Jane S. What shall I say to you? But I obey;—

Shore. Lean on my arm;—

Jane S. Alas! I'm wondrous faint:

But that's not strange, I have not eat these three days.

Shore. Oh, merciless!

Jane S. Oh! I am sick at heart!

Shore. Thou murd'rous sorrow!

Wo't thou still drink her blood, pursue her still?

Must she then die? O my poor penitent!

Speak peace to thy sad heart: she hears me not:

Grief masters ev'ry sense—

Enter CATESBY, L.H.U.E. with a Guard.

Cates. Seize on 'em both, as traitors to the state!—

Bel. What means this violence?

(Guards lay hold on Shore and Belmour.)

Cates. Have we not found you,

In scorn of the protector's strict command,

Assisting this base woman, and abetting

Her infamy?

Shore. Infamy on thy head!

Thou tool of power, thou pander to authority!

I tell thee knave, thou know'st of none so virtuous,

And she that bore thee was an Ethiop to her.

Cates. You'll answer this at full:—away with 'em!

Shore. Is charity grown treason to your court?

What honest man would live beneath such rulers?

I am content that we should die together,—

Cates. Convey the men to prison; but for her,—

Leave her to hunt her fortune as she may.

Jane S. I will not part with him;—for me!—for me!

Oh! must he die for me?

(Following him as he is carried off.—She falls.)

Shore. Inhuman villains!

(Breaks from the Guards.)

Stand off! the agonies of death are on her!—

She pulls, she gripes me hard with her cold hand.

Jane S. Was this blow wanting to complete my ruin?

Oh! let me go, ye ministers of terror.

He shall offend no more, for I will die,

And yield obedience to your cruel master.

Tarry a little but a little longer,

And take my last breath with you.

Shore. Oh, my love!

Why dost thou fix thy dying eyes upon me,

With such an earnest, such a piteous look,

As if thy heart were full of some sad meaning

Thou couldst not speak?—

Jane S. Forgive me!—but forgive me!

Shore. Be witness for me, ye celestial host,

Such mercy and such pardon as my soul

Accords to thee, and begs of heav'n to show thee;

May such befall me at my latest hour,

And make my portion blest or curst for ever.

Jane S. Then all is well, and I shall sleep in peace;—

'Tis very dark, and I have lost you now:—

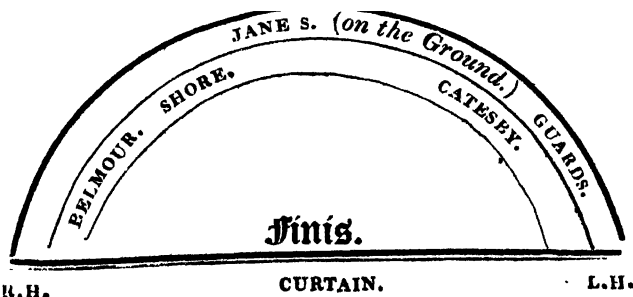
Was there not something I would have bequeath'd you?

But I have nothing left me to bestow,

Nothing but one sad sigh. Oh! mercy, heav'n!

(Dies.)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.



EPILOGUE.

YE modest matrons all, ye virtuous wives,
Who lead with horrid husbands decent lives ;
You, who, for all you are in such a taking,
To see your spouses drinking, gaming, raking,
Yet make a conscience still of cuckold-making ;
What can we say your pardon to obtain ?
This matter here was prov'd against poor Jane :
She never once deny'd it ; but, in short,
Whimper'd,—and cry'd,—“ Sweet sir, I'm sorry for't.”
'Twas well he met a kind, good natur'd soul ;
We are not all so easy to control :
I fancy one might find in this good town,
Some would ha' told the gentleman his own ;
Have answered smart,—“ To what do you pretend,
Blockhead ?—As if I must not see a friend :
Tell me of hackney-coaches,—Jaunts to th' city,—
Where should I buy my china !—Faith, I'll fit ye.”—
Our wife was of a milder, meeker spirit ;
You !—lords and masters ! was not that some merit ?
Don't you allow it to be a virtuous bearing,
When we submit thus to your domineering ?
Well, peace be with her, she did wrong most surely ;
But so do many more who look demurely.
Nor should our mourning madam weep alone,
There are more ways of wickedness than one.
If the reforming stage should fall to shaming
Ill nature, pride, hypocrisy, and gaming ;
The poets frequently might move compassion,
And with she-tragedies o'er-run the nation.
Then judge the fair offender with good nature,
And let your fellow-feeling curb your satire.
What, if our neighbours have some little failing,
Must we needs fall to damning and to railing ?
For her excuse too, be it understood,
That if the woman was not quite so good,
Her lover was a king, she flesh and blood.
And since sh' has dearly paid the sinful score,
Be kind at last, and pity poor Jane Shore.



MR KEAN.

AS CORIOLANUS.

Engraved by Thomson from an original drawing by Wageman

Published 1820 by Simpkin & Marchant, Stationers, & Chapple, Pall Mall.

Orberry's Edition.

CORIOLANUS ;
OR, THE ROMAN MATRON,
A TRAGEDY ;
By W. Shakspeare.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

BY W. OXBERRY, Comedian,

London.

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Remarks.

CORIOLANUS.

Shakspeare was on no occasion the poet of manners ; his characters are citizens of the world, and never bear the stamp of any age or any country. He knew and laid open the human heart in its strengths, and in its weaknesses, paying very little attention to what may not improperly be termed the poetical costume of character. The patrician pride of Coriolanus, the vacillating thoughtlessness of the mob, the crafty democratic spirit of the tribunes, all these are qualities as general as the form of man himself ; to many readers this may appear a defect, but it is precisely from this, whether defect or virtue, that the language of Shakspeare can never grow antiquated till the world has lost its passions and its thinkings, its virtues and its vices. He speaks the general language of mankind, and therefore must be understood by all until that language ceases to be spoken.

The tragedy of Coriolanus is full of bustle, but the plots of Shakspeare were formed upon a plan and for a purpose, not very generally understood ; and never practised on the modern stage. The object of them is, for the most part, to exhibit his characters in every possible point of view ; and not to surprize by their wonders, or delight by their variety. Sometimes the plot may be said to grow out of the peculiar nature of the characters, and it is this very circumstance that forms one of the most prominent of Shakspeare's merits.

Coriolanus is a masterly portrait ; his pride is the pride of habit and mind, and even his submission to his mother is a part and portion of the same nature ; it is moreover the only link that binds him to the spectator ; a being entirely removed above human virtues and human frailties could have little to interest man, but this

one softness in his character like a green spot in a desert, at once reconciles us to the surrounding ruggedness. In the last scene this is more particularly evident ; and it might perhaps be attributed to Kemble as a defect, that he was too much the Roman, and too little the Coriolanus of Shakspeare. Yet while we notice this defect, let him not be robbed of his fair glory ;—hallowed be the laurel on his brow ; it has been justly earned, and will not lightly wither.

Menenius is one of those mixed characters that Shakspeare delighted to blend with tragedy, as being at once a relief and contrast ; but Menenius, though excellent to the reader, is not very effective on the stage ; the contrast he forms is too violent ; he stands too much alone, and mingles like a stranger in the group.

The two Tribunes are people who have never died, and never can die ; they are wandering Jews, destined to perpetual life ; they are to be found in every city, unchanged in feature or habit ; patriotism is their watch-word ; but their hatred of patrician power is purely selfish ; if Coriolanus is consul, “ then our office may during his power, go sleep.” It is not Coriolanus the enemy of the people, but Coriolanus the enemy of their private interest whom they detest.

The people too, are no less true to nature ; now firm, now cowardly ; giving this moment, taking away the next ;—trampled upon by brutal power—and deceived no less cruelly by their trusted tribunes—we at once hate and love, pity and despise them. Shakspeare with a masterly hand has here brought before us the two extremes of arbitrary power, and democratic insolence. The high pretensions of Coriolanus and his friends, who think earth made for their own use, and treat men as beasts, can only be matched by the servility, brutality and ignorance of the people. There is more sound, political instruction, to be gained from this single play, than from volumes of heavy essayists :—it is the very quintessence of history, with a commentary in every line so distinctly visible that he who runs may read.

Volumnia has more of what we might imagine Roman, than any of the other characters ; her very love is pride ; it is the

hero, the conqueror of Corioli she doats upon, and she contrasts well, though rather too strongly, with the tender and timid Virgilia.

There is less of poetical detail in this play, than is usual with Shakspeare ; but what it thus loses in beauty of language, it gains in rapidity of action. That it is not so popular as other of his works, is owing to the héroism of its subject; or perhaps, to speak more correctly, from want of its domestic interest;—it is indeed, a volume of wisdom, but that is a book which few can read and still fewer understand.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is three hours. The first act, occupies the space of thirty minutes;—the second, fifty-five;—the third, thirty,—the fourth, twenty-five;—and the fifth, forty. The half-price commences, generally, about nine o'clock.

Stage Directions.

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| By R.H. | is meant..... | Right Hand. |
| L.H. | | Left Hand. |
| S.E. | | Second Entrance. |
| U.E. | | Upper Entrance. |
| M.D. | | Middle Door. |
| D.F. | | Door in Flat. |
| R.H.D. | | Right Hand Door. |
| L.H.D. | | Left Hand Door. |

Costume.

CAIUS MARCIUS.

First dress. Scarlet robe, white tunic, flesh dress complete, black sandals.—Second dress.—Rich embroidered cuirass and lambarakins, scarlet mantle, red sandals, Roman sword and shield.—Third dress.—A white robe.—Fourth dress.—The Toga.—Fifth dress.—A dark purple mantle, with the cuirass and lambarakins.

MENENIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins, red sandals and helmet.

SICINIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins.

BRUTUS.

Roman tunic, robes, and sandals.

COMINIUS.

Ibid.

AUFIDIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins, richly embroidered, scarlet mantle, red sandals, and helmet.

VOLUSIUS.

Roman cuirass and lambarakins, helmet.

VOLUMNIA.

A drab coloured cloth dress, to come up to the throat, with train and long sleeves, trimmed with plain gold lace, a long veil, and gold band.

VIRGILIA.

White, Ibid.

VALERIA.

Violet-coloured, Ibid. and white veil.

SERVILIA.

Dark,—ibid.

Persons Represented.



Covent-garden.

ROMANS.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Caius Marcius Coriolanus</i> | Mr. Macready. |
| <i>Cominius</i> | Mr. Chapman. |
| <i>Menenius</i> | Mr. Blanchard. |
| <i>Appius</i> | Mr. Mears. |
| <i>Child</i> | Miss Norman. |

PLEBEIANS.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <i>Sicinius</i> | Mr. Connor. |
| <i>Brutus</i> | Mr. Comer. |
| <i>Citizens</i> Messrs. | { Atkins. J. Russell. Barnes. Menage. |
| <i>Volumnia</i> | |
| <i>Virgilia</i> | |
| <i>Valeria</i> | |
| <i>Servilia</i> | Mrs. Faucit. |
| | Miss. Foote. |
| | Mrs. Yates. |
| | Mrs. Coates. |

VOLSCIANS.

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Tullus Aufidius</i> | Mr. Egerton. |
| <i>Volusius</i> | Mr. Claremont. |

*Senators, Lictors, Generals, Soldiers, Matrons,
 Virgins, &c.*

CORIOLANUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

A tumultuous noise within.—Enter a company of Mutinous Citizens, with Clubs, Staves, &c.
R.H.U.E.

1st. *Cit.* Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak.

1st. *Cit.* You are all resolved rather to die, than to famish?

All. Resolv'd, resolv'd.

1st. *Cit.* First, you know, Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

1st. *Cit.* Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

All. Let it be done ;—away, away !

2d. *Cit.* One word, good citizens. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

1st. *Cit.* Against him first : he's a very dog to the commonalty.

2d. *Cit.* Consider you what services he has done for his country?

1st. *Cit.* Very well ;—and we could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

2d. Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

1st. Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

2d. Cit. What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him: you must in no way say, he is covetous.

1st. Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations; he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. (*Shouts within, L.H.*) What shouts are these? the other side o'the city is risen! Why stay we prating here?—To the Capitol!—

All. Come, come. (*Shouts again, L.H.*)

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS, L.H. and MENENIUS, R.H.

Mar. What is the matter, you dissentious rogues?

1st. Cit. We have ever your good word.

Mar. He that will give good words to you, will flatter

Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,
That like not peace, nor war? The one affrights
you,

The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese.

Hang ye!—trust ye!

With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble, that was now your hate,
Him vile, that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who,
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another?—What's their seeking?

(*To Menenius.*)

Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,
The city is well stor'd.

Mar. Hang 'em! They say?—

They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know

What's done i'the Capitol;
 Making parties strong,
 And feebling such as stand not in their liking,
 Below their cobbled shoes.
 They say, there's grain enough!
 Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,
 And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry*
 With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
 As I could pick † my lance. (*Citizens retire, R.H.*)

Men. But I beseech you, what says the other troop?

Mar. They are dissolved:

They said, they were an-hungry; sighed forth pro-
 verbs;—

That, *Hunger broke stone walls*—that, *Dogs must eat*,—

That, *Meat was made for mouths*,—thāt, *The gods sent not*

Corn for the rich men only.—With these shreds
 They vented their complainings; which being an-
 swered,

And a petition granted them, a strange one,—

To break the heart of generosity, ‡

And make bold power look pale,—they threw their
 caps

As they would hang them on the horns o'the moon,
 Shouting their emulation. ||

Men. What is granted them?

Mar. Five tribunes, to defend their vulgar wis-
 doms,

Of their own choice. One's Junius Brutus,
 Sicinius Velutus, and I know not——'Sdeath!

The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,

Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time

Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes

For insurrection's arguing.

Men. This is strange.

* A *quarry* among hunters signifies the reward given to hounds
 after they have hunted, or the venison which is taken by hunting.—

† Pitch.—‡ High birth.—|| Faction.

Enter FULVIUS, R.H.

Ful. Where's Caius Marcius?

Mar. Here.—What is the matter?

(Crosses to Fulvius.)

Ful. The news is, sir, the Volscians are in arms.

Mar. I am glad on't,—then we shall have means to vent

Our musty superfluity.

Enter COMINIUS, LICTORS, SICINIUS and BRUTUS, R.H.—(Fulvius passes behind to L.H.—Lictors cross, and range behind Fulvius;—Sicinius and Brutus go to the Citizens.)

Com. Marcius, 'tis true, that you have lately told us,

The Volscians are in arms.

Mar. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility:
And, were I any thing but what I am,
I'd wish me only he.

Com. You have fought together?

Mar. Were half to half the world by the ears, and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him:—he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.

Men. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

Com. It is your former promise.

Mar. Sir, it is;
And I am constant: *—thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.

Men. O, true bred!

Com. Your company to the Capitol: where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.

(Tribunes and Citizens advance, R.H.)

* Immovable in my resolution.

Mar. Lead you on.

[*Exeunt Fulvius, Lictors, and Cominius, L.H.*]

Men. Hence ; to your homes !—begone.

Mar. Nay, let them follow ;

The Volscians have much corn ; take these rats
thither,

To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth ;—pray, follow. (*To Men.*)

[*Exeunt Men. and Mar. L.H. Citizens, R.H.*]

Sic. Was ever man so proud,
As is this Marcius ?

Bru. He has no equal.

Sic. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

Bru. Mark'd you his lip, and eyes ?

Sic. Nay, but his taunts.

Bru. Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the
gods.—

The present wars devour him ! He is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

Sic. Such a nature,
'Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon. But I do wonder,
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

Bru. Fame, at which he aims,
In which already he is well grac'd, cannot
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by
A place below the first ; for what miscarries
Shall be the General's fault, tho' he perform
To the utmost of a man ; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius, *O, if he
Had borne the business !*

Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits* rob Cominius.

Bru. Come ;
Half of Cominius' honours are to Marcius,

* Merits and *demerits* had anciently the same meaning.

Though Marcius earn'd them not ; and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honours, though, indeed,
In aught he merit not.

Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the despatch is made ; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.

Bru. Let's along. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*An Apartment in CAIUS MARCIUS'
House in Rome.*

Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA, R.H.

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing, or express yourself in a more comfortable sort : if my son were my husband, I would freely rejoice in that absence, wherein he won honour. When yet he was but tender-bodied, and my only son ; when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way ; when, for a day of kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding ; I,—considering how honour would become such a person ; that it was no better than picture like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir,—was pleas'd to let him seek danger, where he was like to find fame : to a cruel war I sent him : from whence he return'd, his brows bound with oak.* I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child, than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam ? How then ?

Vol. Then his good report should have been my son. Hear me profess sincerely :—had I a dozen sons,—each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius,—I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country, than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

* The crown given by the Romans to him that saved the life of a citizen, which was accounted more honourable than any other.

Enter SERVILIA, L.H.

Ser. Madam, the lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Vir. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Vol. Indeed, you shall not.
Methinks, I hither hear your husband's drum;
I see him pluck Aufidius down by the hair;
Methinks, I see him stamp thus,—and call thus;—
Come on, you cowards, you were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome:—His bloody brow
With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes;
Like to a harvest-man, that's task'd to mow
Or all, or lose his hire.

Vir. His bloody brow! O, Jupiter, no blood.

Vol. Away, you fool! it more becomes a man,
Than gilt his trophy: the breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier
Than Hector's forehead, when it spit forth blood
At Grecian swords' contending.—Tell Valeria,
We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit Servilia*, L.H.]

Vir. Heav'ns bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

Vol. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Enter SERVILIA and VALERIA, L.H.

Val. My ladies both, good day to you!

[*Exit Servilia*, L.H.]

You are manifest housekeepers!—

How does your little son?

Vir. I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

Vol. He had rather see the swords, and hear a drum,
than look upon his schoolmaster.

Val. O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis
a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I look'd upon him o'
Wednesday half an hour together,—he has such a con-
firm'd countenance! I saw him run after a gilded

butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; caught it again: or whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth, and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammoock'd it!

Val. One of his father's moods.

Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

Vir. A crack, madam.

Val. Come, lay aside your business; I must have you play the idle housewife with me this afternoon.

Vir. No, good madam: I will not out of doors.

Val. Not out of doors.

Val. She shall, she shall. (*Crosses to Centre.*)

Vir. Indeed, no, by your patience: I will not over the threshold, till my lord return from the wars.

Val. Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably: you would be another Penelope: yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence, did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come, come, you shall go with us.

Vir. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth.

Val. In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

Vir. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Val. Verily, I do not jest with you.

Vir. Indeed, madam?

Val. In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is:—the Volscians have an army forth, against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power:—your lord, and Titus Lartius, are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief wars. This is true, on my honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

Vir. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter. [*Exit, R. H.*]

Val. Let her alone, lady; as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth. [*Exeunt, L. H.*]

SCENE III.—*A Wood, near the Camp of Cominius.**(Shouts, R.H.—Trumpets sound a Retreat.)**Enter COMINIUS, R.H. with Soldiers, Retreating.—(The Soldiers form themselves on R.H.—Some bearing the Banners, some with Swords and Shields, and some with Spears and Shields.)*

Com. Breathe you, my friends ;—well fought;
 We are come off
 Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
 Nor cowardly in retire.—Believe me, sirs,
 We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
 By interims, and conveying gusts, we have heard
 The charges of our friends ;—the Roman Gods
 Lead their successes as we wish our own!

Enter APPIUS, L.H.U.E.

Thy news?

App. The citizens of Corioli have issued,
 And given to Marcius battle :
 I saw our party to the trenches driv'n,
 And came in haste away.

Com. How long is't since?

App. About an hour, my lord. Spies of the Volscians
 Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel
 Three or four miles about ; else had I, sir,
 Half an hour since brought my report.

(Appius retires towards the Soldiers, R.H. U.E.)

Com. *(Looking off, L.H.U.E.)* Who's yonder,
 That does appear as he were flay'd ? O Gods !
 He has the stamp of Marcius.

*(Marcius within, L.H. U.E.)**Mar.* Come I too late ?

Com. The shepherd knows not thunder from a
 tabor,

More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
From every meaner man's.

*Enter MARCIUS, L.H. U.F. — The twelve Lictors move
into the centre, at the back part of the Stage.*

Mar. Come I too late?

Com. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.

Mar. O! let me clip you,
In arms as sound, as when I woo'd; in heart
As merry, as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burnt to bedward.

Com. Flower of warriors,
How is't with Titus Lartius?

Mar. As with a man busied about decrees;
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him, or pitying,* threat'ning the other;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.

Com. Where is that slave,
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?
Where is he?

(Appius advances, and Fulvius prepares to seize him.)

Mar. Let him alone,
He did inform the truth:—but for our gentlemen,
The common file, (a plague! tribunes for them!)
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat, as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.

Com. But how prevail'd you?

Mar. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think:—
Where is the enemy! Are you lords o'the field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?

Com. Marcius,
We have at disadvantage fought, and did
Retire to win our purpose.

Mar. How lies their battle? Know you on which side
They have plac'd their men of trust?

* Remitting his ransom.

Com. As I guess, Marcius,
Their hands i' the vayward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust : o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.

Mar. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By the blood we have shed together,
That you directly
Set me against Aufidius.

Com. Tho' I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath,
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking ; take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.

Mar. Those are they,
That most are willing.—If any such be here,
That love this painting,
Wherein you see me smear'd ;
If any think, brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country's dearer than himself ;
Let him, alone, or so many, so minded,
Wave thus, to express his disposition.

*(Flourish of Trumpets.—Soldiers shout three times,
and wave their swords.)*

If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volcians ?—Follow Marcius ! come.—

[Exeunt, R.H.]

*(Alarums.—Shouts.—A loud Flourish.—Battle
within.)*

SCENE IV.—*The Camp of Cominius.*

Retreat sounded.—Enter MARCIUS, COMINIUS, FULVIUS, APPIUS, and Soldiers, R.H. U.R.

Com. (R.H.) If I should tell thee over thy day's
work,
Thou'lt not believe thy deeds ; but I'll report it,

Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles ;
 Where the dull Tribunes,
 That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,
 Shall say, against their hearts,—*We thank the Gods,*
Our Rome hath such a soldier.

Mar. (L.H.) Pray now, no more : my mother,
 Who has a charter to extol her blood,
 When she does praise me, grieves me : I have done,
 As you have done,—that's what I can ; induc'd
 As you have been,—that's for my country.

Com. You shall not be
 The grave of your deserving ; Rome must know
 The value of her own ;
 Therefore, I beseech you,
 (In sign of what you are, not to reward
 What you have done,) before our army hear me.

Mar. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
 To hear themselves remembered. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Com. Should they not,
 Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
 And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,
 (Whereof we've ta'en good, and good store,) of all
 The treasure, in this field achiev'd, and city,
 We render you the tenth ; to be ta'en forth,
 Before the common distribution, at
 Your only choice.

Mar. I thank you, general :
 But cannot make my heart consent to take
 A bribe, to pay my sword : I do refuse it.

(*A Flourish of Trumpets, &c.*)

May these same instruments, which you profane,
 Never sound more ! when drums and trumpets shall
 I' the field prove flatterers, let the camps as cities
 Be made of false-fac'd soothing. (*Flourish again.*)
 No more, I say ; (*Crosses to R.H.*)

For that I have not wash'd my nose that bled,
 Or foil'd some debile wretch,—which without note
 Here's many else have done,—you shout me forth,
 In acclamations hyperbolical ;

As if I lov'd my little should be dieted
In praises sauc'd with lies.

Com. Too modest are you ;
More cruel to your good report, than grateful
To us that give you truly : therefore, be it known,
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
Wears this war's garland:—

For what he did before Corioli, call him,
With all the applause and clamour of the host,
Caius Marcius Coriolanus. Bear
The addition nobly ever !—

(*Flourish of Trumpets.—Shouts.—&c.*)

Cor. I will go wash ;
And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush or no. Howbeit, I thank you.

Com. So, to our tent :
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success,

Cor. The Gods begin to mock me : I that now
Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.

Com. Take't, 'tis yours.—What is't ?

Mar. I some time lay, here in Corioli,
At a poor man's house ; he us'd me kindly :
While we were fighting here, e'en now,—poor
wretch !—

He cried to me ; I saw him prisoner ;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity : I request you
To give my poor host freedom.

Com. O, well begg'd !
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free, as is the wind.—His name ?

Mar. By Jupiter, forgot :—
I'm weary ; yea, my memory is tir'd.— •
Have we no wine here ?

Com. Go we to our tent ;
The blood upon your visage dries : 'tis time

It should be look'd to :—come.

[*A March*.—*Exeunt*, R.H.U.E.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Rome.*

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, and BRUTUS, R.H.

Men. The augurer tells me, we shall have news to night.

Bru. Good, or bad ?

Men. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Men. Pray you, whom does the wolf love !

Sic. The lamb.

Men. Ay, to devour him ; as the hungry plebeians would the noble Marcius.—You two are old men ; tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

Both. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor, that you two have not in abundance ?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stor'd with all.

Sic. Especially, in pride.

Bru. And topping all others in boasting.

Men. This is strange now.—Do you two know how you are censur'd here in the city ; I mean of us o'the right-hand file ? Do you ?

Bru. Why,—how are we censur'd ?

Men. Because you talk of pride now.—Will you not be angry ?

Both. Well, well, sir ; well.

Men. You blame Marcius for being proud ?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

Men. I know, you can do very little alone.—You talk of pride ! O, that you could turn your eyes towards

the napes of your necks,* and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O, that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates, (alias, fools,) as any in Rome.

Sic. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

Men. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine, with not a drop of allaying Tiber, in't: what I think, I utter; and spend my malice within breath.

Bru. Come, sir, come; we know you well enough.

Men. You know neither me, yourselves, nor any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon, in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller, and then rejourn the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience.—You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table, than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

Men. Our very priests must become mockers, if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave, as to stuff a botcher's cushion; or to be entomb'd in an ass's pack saddle. Yet, you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors, since Deucalion: though, peradventure, some of the best of them were hereditary hangmen. I will be bold to take my leave of you. (*Crosses to R.H.*)
(*Brutus and Sicinius stand aside.*)

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and VALERIA, R.H.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies, (and the moon,

* With allusion to the fable, which says, that every man has a bag hanging before him, in which he puts his neighbour's faults, and another behind him in which he stows his own.

were she earthly, no nobler,) whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.—

(Crosses to L.H.)

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation.

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee:—Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him; the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to night.—A letter for me?

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw it.

Men. A letter for me? It gives me an estate of seven year's health; in which time, I will make a lip at the physician.—Is he not wounded? He was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no.

Vol. O, he is wounded, I thank the Gods for't.

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much:—brings he a victory in his pocket, the wounds become him.

Vol. On's brows, Menenius: he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplin'd Aufidius soundly?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes,—they fought together, but Aufidius got off.

Men. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: an he had staid by him, I would not have been so fidiu'd for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possess'd of this?

Vol. Yes, yes, yes: the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war: he hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

Val. In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

Men. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

Vir. The Gods grant them true!

Val. True?

(*Sicinius and Brutus come forward, R.H.*)

Men. True? I'll be sworn they are true.—Where is he wounded?—Heaven save your good worships! (*To the Tribunes.*) *Marcus* is coming home: he has more cause to be proud.—Where is he wounded? (*To Val.*)

Val. I'the shoulder and i'the left arm. He receiv'd, in the repulse of Tarquin, seven hurts i'the body.

Men. One in the neck, and two in the thigh,—there's nine that I know.

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

Men. Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave.

Vol. He with his single arm subdu'd Corioli.
His sword, death's stamp,
Where it did mark, it took: from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was tim'd with dying cries;—
Where'er he went, before him fortune flew,
While victory upon his dreaded brow
Sat thron'd, and joyful clapp'd her silver wings;—
Three times mine eagle singled out Aufidius,
And thrice the Volscians sunk beneath his thunder,
Bending the knee, as t'were in adoration.

Hark! hark! (*Flourish of Trumpets, L.H.*)

These are the ushers of *Marcus*;—before him
He carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Rome.*—*A Triumphal Arch.*

(*Citizens run across, shouting from R.H. U.E.*)

An Ovation.—*Procession enters, R.H. U.E. through the Arch.*—*Exeunt, R.H.*

ORDER OF PROCESSION.

Trophy.—*S. P. Q. R.*

Two Banners.—*Corioli.*—*Two Banners.*—*Civic Crowns.*

CORIOLANUS.

Two Banners.—Silver Eagles.

Six Fasces, two and two.

Chief Eagle.

Fulvius and Appius.

Two Swords and Shields.—Two Trophies,—Hands.

Two Spears and Shields.

Two Trophies,—Wolves.—Two Swords and Shields.

Fame.

Two Spears and Shields.

Two Golden Eagles.

Two Swords and Shields.—Two Battlements.

Two Spears and Shields.

Two Eagles and Patera's.—Two Swords and Shields.

(As they are going out, three shouts, L.H. U.E.)

SECOND DIVISION.

Four Boys, two and two, in Surplusses with Censers.

Two Priests.—Fires and Staves.

Two Priests—Knives.

Six Girls, bearing the Lamb.

Two Priests—Axes.—Two Priests—Fires.

Six Ladies, two and two.—Six Senators two and two.

(As they go off, three shouts behind, R.H. U.E.)

THIRD DIVISION.

S. P. Q. R.

Two Banners—Antium and Volsci.

Ten Musicians, two and two.—Six Fasces, two and two.

Two Trophies—Goat and Bour.

Two Trophies—Raven and Pegasus.

Sextus.

A Bier with Trophies.

Lucius.

Two Trophies—Lion and Ram.

Four Captive Generals, in Chains.

Two Trophies of Arms.

Navius.

Trophies on a Bier.

Aruns.

Two Trophies—Sphinx and Dragon.

Six Spears and Shields.
(As they go off, shouts, R.H. U.E.)

FOURTH DIVISION.

Choristers.
"See the Conquering Hero comes."
(As they go off, three shouts, R.H. U.E.)

FIFTH DIVISION.

Sextus.—Bier with Trophies.—Trophies of Arms.
Trophies on Biers.—Range in front of Musicians.
Fame, exactly in the Centre.
Two Standards—S. P. Q. R. advance R.H. and L.H.
Two Standards—Corioli.
Two Standards—Antium and Volsci.
Two Silver Eagles.
Fulvius and Appius.
Two Standards—Wolves.—Two Standards—Battlements.
Two Standards—Eagles and Pater's.
Sextus and Lucius.
Two Standards—Hands.
Two Standards—Civic Crowns.
Navius and Aruns.
Six Senators.
Brutus and Sicinius.
Six Ladies.
Roman Matrons.
Valeria and Servilia.—Virgilia.
Volumnia.
Two Golden Eagles.
Six Fasces.
Menenius and Cominius.
Coriolanus.
Chief Eagle.—Six Fasces —Spears and Shields.
Swords and Shields.

Cor. No more of this, it does offend my heart;
 Pray now, no more.

Com. Look, sir, your mother,—

Cor. O! *(Kneels.)*

You have, I know, petition'd all the Gods
For my prosperity.

Vol. Nay, my good soldier, up ; (*Cor. rises.*)
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly nam'd,—
What is it ? Coriolanus must I call thee ?
But O, thy wife—

Cor. My gracious silence,* hail !
Would'st thou have laugh'd, had I come coffin'd home,
That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah, my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

Vol. I know not where to turn. O welcome home ;
And welcome, general ;—and you are welcome all.

Men. A hundred thousand welcomes : I could
weep,
And I could laugh ; I'm light and heavy.—Welcome !
A curse begin at the very root of his heart,
That is not glad to see thee ! You are three,
That Rome should dote on : yet, by the faith of men,
We've some old crab-trees here at home, that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet, welcome, warriors !
We call a nettle, but a nettle ; and
The faults of fools, but folly.

Com. Ever right.†
Give way there, and go on.

Cor. Your hand, and yours. (*To his wife and mother.*)
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited ;
From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings,
But with them change of honours.

Vol. I have liv'd,
To see inherited my very wisnes,
And buildings of my fancy ; only there
Is one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

Cor. Know, good mother,

* By my gracious silence, I believe, the poet meant, thou whose
silent tears are more eloquent and grateful to me than the clamor-
ous applause of the rest.—† Ever the same affectionate friend.

I had rather be their servant in my way ;
 Than sway with them in theirs.
 On, to the Capitol.

A Grand March.—Exeunt Volumnia, Coriolanus, Virgilia, Cominius, Menenius, Valeria, Servilia, four Matrons, Brutus, and Sicinius.—
„ Scene closes on the rest.—Shouts.—Drums, &c.

SCENE III.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, R.H.

Bru. The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind
 To hear him speak : the matrons flung their gloves,
 Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs,
 Upon him as he pass'd : the nobles bended
 As to Jove's statue : and the commons made
 A shower, and thunder, with their caps, and shouts.
 I never saw the like ;—
 Such a pothor,
 As if that whatsoever God, who leads him,
 Were slightly crept into his human powers,
 And gave him graceful posture.

Sic. On the sudden,
 I warrant him consul.

Bru. Then our office may,
 During his power, go sleep.

Sic. He cannot temperately transport his honours
 From where he should begin, and end ; but will
 Lose those that he hath won.

Bru. In that there's comfort.
 I heard him swear,
 Were he to stand for consul, never would he
 Appear in the market-place, nor on him put
 The napless vesture* of humility ;

* It was a custom for the candidates, during the time of election, to wear a white Linen Robe, and to appear in public without a retinue.

Than have him hold that purpose, and to put it
In execution.

Bru. 'Tis most like he will.

Sic. It shall be to him then, as our good wills;
A sure destruction.

Enter FULVIUS, hastily, L.H.

Bru. What's the matter?

Ful. You're sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought,
That Marcius shall be consul.

Bru. Let's to the Capitol:
And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
But hearts for the event.

Sic. Have with you. *[Exeunt, L.H.]*

SCENE IV.—*Rome.—The Capitol.*

(Flourish of Trumpets.)

*Enter CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS,
COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, Senators, and
Officers. L.H.—(They take their seats on each
side of the Stage.)*

Men. (L.H.) Having determin'd of the Volscians,
It remains,

Most reverend and grave elders, to desire

The present consul, and last general,

To report

A little of that worthy work perform'd

By Caius Marcius Coriolanus; whom

We meet here, both to thank, and to remember

With honours like himself.

Worthy Cominius, speak.

(Coriolanus, R.H. rises, and offers to go away.)

Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear

What you have nobly done.

Nor, showing (as the manner is) his wounds

To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

Sic. I wish no better.

Cor. Your honours' pardon ;
I had rather have my wounds to heal again,
Than hear say how I got them.

Men. (*To Cor.*) Pray now, sit down.

Cor. I had rather have one scratch my head
i'the sun,
When the alarum were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd.

[*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Men. Masters o' the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter,
When you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour,
Than one of his ears to hear it ?—Proceed, Cominius.

Com. (*Seated in the State Chair, in the centre of
the Stage.*) I shall lack voice; the deeds of
Coriolanus

Should not be utter'd feebly.—It is held,
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver : if it be,
The man I speak of cannot in the world,
Be singly counterpois'd. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others ;
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He lurch'd all swords o'the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home :

Alone he entered

The mortal gate o'the city ; aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-inforcement struck
Corioli, like a planet. Now all's his :
When bye and bye the din of war 'gan pierce
His ready sense : then straight his doubled spirit
Requicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he ; where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'Twere a perpetual spoil : and, till we call'd
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.

Men. Worthy man !

Com. All our spoils he kick'd at ;
And look'd upon things precious, as they were
The common muck o'the world : he covets less
Than misery itself would give ; rewards
His deeds with doing them ; and is content
To spend the time, to spend it.

Men. He's right noble ;
Let him be call'd for.

Enter FULVIUS, R.H.D.

Com. He doth appear.

Enter CORIOLANUS and FULVIUS, R.H.D.

Men. The Senate, Coriolanus, are well pleas'd
To make thee consul.

Cor. I do owe them still
My life, and services.

Men. It then remains,
That you do speak to the people.

Cor. I do beseech you,
Let me o'er-leap that custom ; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage : please
you,
That I may pass this doing.

Sic. (L.H.) Sir, the people
Must have their voices ; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.

Men. Put them not to't :
Pray you, go fit you to the custom ; and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with the form.

Cor. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.

Bru. (L.H. to *Sic.*) Mark you that ?

Cor. To brag unto them,—Thus I did, and thus,—

Show them the unaking scars which I should hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only:—

Men. Do not stand upon't.—

We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose;—to them, and to our noble consul,
Wish we all joy and honour.

Com. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

[*Flourish of Trumpets.—Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE V.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter CITIZENS, R.H.

2d. Cit. Once,* if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him:

1st. Cit. We may, sir, if we will.

2d. Cit. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do; for, if he show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds, and speak for them: so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful, were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we, being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

1st. Cit. Here he comes, and in the gown of humility; mark his behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars: wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues: therefore, follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt Citizens, L.H.*]

Enter CORIOLANUS with MENENIUS, R.H.

Men. O, sir, you are not right: have you not known

* Once for all.—

The worthiest men have done't?

Cor. What must I say?—

I pray, sir,——Plague upon't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace.—Look, sir,—my wounds,—
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran
From noise of our own drums.

Men. O me, the gods!

You must not speak of that; you must desire them
To think upon you.

Cor. Think upon me? Hang 'em!

I would they would forget me.

Men. You'll mar all:

I'll leave you. Pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner. [*Exit* R.H.]

Enter First and Second CITIZENS, L.H.

Cor. So, here comes a brace.—(*Aside.*)

You know the cause, sirs, of my standing here.

1st. Cit. We do, sir; tell us what has brought
you to't.

Cor. Mine own desert.

2d. Cit. Your own desert?

Cor. Ay, not

Mine own desire.

1st Cit. How! not your own desire?

Cor. No, sir:

'Twas never my desire yet to trouble

The poor with begging.

1st. Cit. You must think, if we give you any thing,
We hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well then, I pray, your price o'the consulship?

1st. Cit. The price is, sir, to ask it kindly.

Cor. Kindly!

Sir, I pray, let me ha't; I've wounds to show you,
Which shall be yours in private.—Your good voice, sir;
What say you?

2d Cit. You shall have it, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir:—

There is in all two worthy voices begged :—(*Aside.*)
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

I have your alms ; adieu.

1st *Cit.* But this is something odd.

2d. *Cit.* An'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter.

[*Exeunt Citizens, L.H.*]

Cor. Most sweet voices !—

Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Here come more voices.

Enter the other CITIZENS, L.H.

Your voices :—for your voices I have fought ;
Watch'd for your voices ; for your voices, bear
Of wounds two dozen odd ; battles thrice six
I've seen and heard of :—for your voices, have
Done many things, some less, some more :—your
voices :—

Indeed, I would be consul.

3d. *Cit.* He has done nobly, and cannot go without
any honest man's voice.

4th. *Cit.* Therefore let him be consul : the gods
give him joy, and make him a good friend to the
people !

All. Amen, amen.—

Heaven save thee, noble consul !

[*Exeunt all the Citizens, R.H.*]

Cor. Worthy voices !

Enter MENENIUS, BRUTUS, and SICINIUS, R.H.

Men. You've stood your limitation ; and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice : remains,
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Cor. Is this done ?

Sic. The custom of request you have discharg'd :
The people do admit you ; and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Cor. Where ? At the senate house ?

Sic. There, Coriolanus.

Cor. May I then change these garments?

Sic. You may, sir.

Cor. That I'll straight do: and, knowing myself again,

Repair to the senate-house. [*Exit*, R.H.]

Men. I'll keep you company.—Will you along?

Bru. We stay here for the people.

Sic. Fare you well. [*Exit Menenius*, R.H.]

He has it now; and by his looks, methinks,

'Tis warm at his heart.

Bru. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds:—will you dismiss the people?

Re-enter all the CITIZENS, R.H.

Sic. How now, my masters? Have you chose this man?

2d. Cit. He has our voices, sir.

Bru. We pray the gods, he may deserve your loves.

1st. Cit. Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,
He mock'd us, when he begged our voices.

3d. Cit. Certainly,
He flouted us downright.

2d. Cit. No, 'tis his kind of speech, he did not mock us.

1st. Cit. Not one among us, save yourself, but says,
He us'd us scornfully: he should have show'd us
His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for his country.

Sic. Why, so he did, I am sure.

1st. Cit. No; no man saw 'em.
He said, he had wounds, which he could show in private:

I would be consul, says he: *aged custom*,

But by your voices, will not so permit me;

Your voices, therefore: When we granted that,
Here was,—*I thank you for your voices*,—*thank you*,—

Your most sweet voices:—*now you have left your voices*,

I have nothing further with you. -Was not this mockery?

Sic. Why, either, you were ignorant to see't;
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?

Bru. Did you perceive,
He did solicit you in free contempt,
When he did need your loves; and do you think,
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you,
When he hath power to crush?

Sic. Have you,
Ere now, deny'd the asker? And now again,
On him, that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues?

1st. Cit. He's not confirm'd, we may deny him yet.

3d. Cit. And will deny him:
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

1st. Cit. I twice five hundred, and their friends to
piece 'em.

Bru. Get you hence, instantly; and tell those
friends,—

They have chose a consul, that will from them take
Their liberties; make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking,
As therefore kept to do so.

Sic. Enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you:
Say, you chose him
More after our commandment, than as guided
By your own true affections:
Lay the fault on us.

Bru. Ay, spare us not.
Say, you ne'er had done't,
(Harp on that still,) but by our putting on:
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.

All. We will; we will.

[*Exeunt Citizens, L.H. Sic. and Bru. R.H.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter COMINIUS, CORIOLANUS, and MENENIUS, R.H.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?
So then the Volscians stand but as at first;
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon's again.

Com. They are worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

Cor. Behold! these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o'the common mouth. I do despise
 them;
For they do prank* them in authority,
Against all noble sufferance. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS, L.H.

Sic. Pass no further. *(To Coriolanus.)*

Cor. Ha!—what is that?—

Bru. It will be dangerous to
Go on: no further.

Cor. What makes this change?

Men. The matter?

Com. Hath he not pass'd the nobles and the
 commons?

Bru. Cominius, no.

Cor. Have I had children's voices?

Men. Tribunes, give way; he shall to the market-
 place.

Bru. Thè people are incens'd against him.

Cor. Are these your herd?—
Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues?—What are your
 offices?

* Plume, deck, dignify themselves.

You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?

Men. Be calm, be calm. (*To Cor.*)

Cor. It is a purpos'd thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility.

Bru. Call't not a plot.

The people cry you mock'd them; and, of late,
Where corn was given them gratis, you repin'd,
Scandal'd the suppliants of the people; call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Cor. Why, this was known before.

Bru. Not to them all.

Cor. Have you informed them since?

Bru. How! I inform them!

Cor. You are like to do such business.

Bru. Not unlike,

Each way, to better yours.

Cor. Why then should I be consul? By yon clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.

Men. Well, no more.—(*To Cor.*)

Cor. How!—no more?

As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words till their decay, against those meazels*,
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.

Bru. You speak o'the people,
As if you were a God to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.

Sic. 'Twere well

We let the people know't.

Men. What, what? His choler?

Cor. Choler!

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind.

Sic. It is a mind

That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.

* *Meazels*—*Mesell* is used in *Pierce Plowman's* vision, for a *leper*.

Cor. *Shall* remain ?

Hear you this Triton of the minnows ? Mark you
His absolute *shall* ?—

Shall !—

Com. Well,—on to the market-place.

Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o'the storehouse gratis, as 'twas us'd
Sometime in Greece,—

Men. Well, well, no more of that.

Cor. I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.

Bru. Why, shall the people give
One, that speaks thus, their voice ?

Sic. He has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.

Cor. Thou wretch ! despite o'erwhelm thee !—
What should the people do with these bald tribunes ?
On whom depending, their obedience fails
To the greater bench : in a rebellion,
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen ; in a better hour,
Let what is meet, be said, it must be meet,
And throw their power i'the dust.

Bru. Manifest treason. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Sic. This a consul ? No.

Bru. The Ædiles, ho !—Let him be apprehended.

Sic. Go, call the people ; (*Brutus beckons the
Citizens, who enter immediately, R.H.*)

In whose name, myself
Attach thee, as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to the public weal :—
Obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

(*Laying hold on Coriolanus.*)

Cor. Hence, or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.

Bru. Or let us stand to our authority,
Or let us lose it :—we do here pronounce,
Upon the part o'the people, in whose power
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy
Of present death.

Sic. Therefore, lay hold of him ;
 Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence
 Into destruction cast him.

Cor. No ; I'll die here. (*Drawing his sword.*)

Men. Down with that sword :—tribunes, withdraw
 awhile.—

I pr'ythee, noble friend, home to thy house ;
 Leave us to cure this cause ;—for 'tis a sore
 You cannot tent yourself : begone, 'beseech you.

Com. Come, sir, along with us.

Cor. On fair ground,—

I could beat forty of them.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus, and Cominius, L.H.*]

Men. You worthy tribunes,—

Sic. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock.
 With rigorous hands ; he hath resisted law,
 And therefore law shall scorn him further trial.

1st. Cit. He shall well know,
 The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
 And we their hands.

All. He shall, be sure on't.

Men. Sir,—

Sic. Peace.

Men. Do not cry havock, where you should but
 hunt

With modest warrant.

Sic. Sir, how comes't,—that you
 Have help to make this rescue ?

Men. Hear me speak :—

As I do know the consul's worthiness,
 So can I name his faults :—

Sic. Consul !—What consul ?

Men. The consul Coriolanus.

Bru. He a consul !—

All. No, no, no, no, no.

Men. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good
 people,

I may be heard, I'd crave a word or two ;
 The which shall turn you to no further harm,
 Than so much loss of time.

Bru. We'll hear no more;—
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence;
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.

(Citizens rush tumultuously towards L.H.)

Men. One word more, one word:—
Proceed by process;
Lest parties (as he is belov'd,) break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.

Bru. If 'twere so,—

Sic. What do ye talk?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?

Men. Consider this;—he hath been bred i'the
wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In bouted language; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer, by a lawful form,
(In peace) to his utmost peril.

Sic. Noble Menenius,
Be you then as the people's officer.—

(Crosses with Brutus, to R.H.)

Meet on the market-place:—we'll attend you there:
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed
In our first way.

Men. I'll go and bring him to you.

*[Exeunt; Sicinius, Brutus, and Citizens, R.H.—
Menenius, L.H.]*

SCENE II.—*Rome.—An Apartment in Coriolanus' House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS and VOLUMNIA, L.H.

Cor. Let them pull all about mine ears; present
me
Death on the wheel, or at wild horses' heels;
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down stretch

Below the beam of sight, yet will I still
Be thus to them.

Vol. But hear me, Marcius.—

Cor. I muse, my mother
Does not approve me further.
Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say, I play,
Truly the man I am.

Vol. O, sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on,
Before you had worn it out.

Cor. Why, let it go. *(Crosses to L.H.)*

Vol. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, if
You had not show'd them how you were dispos'd,
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Cor. Let them hang. *(Crosses to R.H.)*

Vol. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS, L.H.

Men. Come, come, you've been too rough, something
too rough;
You must return, and mend it.

Vol. Pray, be counsell'd;
I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain, that leads my use of anger,
To better 'vantage.

Men. Well said, noble woman:
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that
The violent fit o'the time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Cor. What must I do?

Men. Return to the tribunes.

Cor. Well,
What then? What then?

Men. Repent what you have spoke.

Cor. For them?—I cannot do it to the gods;

Must I then do't to them ?

Vol. You are too absolute;
 Tho' therein you can never be too noble,
 But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,
 Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,
 I'the war do grow together : grant that, and tell me,
 In peace, what each of them by th'other lose,
 That they combine not there.

Cor. Tush !—tush !— (*Crosses to Centre.*)

Men. A good demand.

Cor. Why force* you this ?

Vol. Because that now it lies on you to speak
 To the people :
 I would dissemble with my nature, where
 My fortunes, and my friends, at stake, requir'd
 I should do so in honour.

I pr'ythee now, my son,
 Go to them ;
 Say to them,
 Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
 Hast not the soft way, which, thou dost confess,
 Were fit for thee to use, as they to claim,
 In asking their good loves ; but thou wilt frame
 Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
 As thou hast power, and person.

Men. This but done,
 Even as she speaks, why, all their hearts were yours ;
 For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
 As words to little purpos?.

Com. (*Behind, L.H.*) Where's Coriolanus ?

Enter COMINIUS, L.H.

Men. Here is Cominius.

Com. I have been i'the market-place : and, sir, 'tis
 fit
 You make strong party, or defend yourself
 By calmness, or by absence ; all's in anger.

Men. Only fair speech.

Com. I think, 'twill serve, if he

* Urge.

Can thereto frame his spirit.

Vol. He must, and will :—

Pr'ythee, now, say you will, and go about it.

Cor. Must I go show them my unbarb'd* sconce?
Must I

With my base tongue, give to my noble heart
A lie, that it must bear? Well, I will do't:
Yet were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,
And throw it against the wind.—'To th' market-
place:—(*Crosses to Menenius.*)

You have put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to the life.

Com. Come, come, we'll prompt you.

Vol. I pr'ythee now, sweet son; as thou hast said,
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.

Cor. Well, I must do't:

Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit! My throat of war be turn'd,
Which quired† with my drum, in'o a pipe
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep!

A beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips; and my arm'd knees,
Which bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms!—I will not do't:
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And, by my body's action, teach my mind
A most inherent baseness. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Vol. At thy choice then:

To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour,
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin; let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride, than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness; for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me;
But owe† thy pride thyself. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Cor. Pray, be content;

* Bare, uncovered.—† Own.—‡ Which played in concert with my drum.

Mother, I am going to the market-place ;
 Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
 Cog their hearts from them, and come home below'd
 Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going :
 Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul ;
 Or never trust to what my tongue can do
 I'the way of flattery, further.

Vol. Do your will. [*Exit*, R.H.]

Com. Arm yourself
 To answer mildly ; for they are prepar'd
 With accusations, as I hear, more strong
 Than are upon you yet.

Cor. The word is, mildly :—pray you, let us go :—
(*Crosses to centre.*)

Let them accuse me by invention, I
 Will answer in mine honour.

Men. Ay,—but mildly.

Cor. Well, mildly be it then ;—mildly !
[*Exeunt*, *Cor.* *Com.* and *Men.*, L.H.]

SCENE III.—*Rome.—The Forum.*

Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and *Citizens*, R.H.U.E.

Bru. Put him to choler straight : he hath been
 us'd

Ever to conquer, and to have his worth*
 Of contradiction : being once chaf'd, he cannot
 Be rein'd again to temp'rance ; then he speaks
 What's in his heart ; and that is there, which looks
 With us to break his neck.

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, and COMINIUS, L.H.

Sic. Well, here he comes.

Men. Calmly, I do beseech you. (*To Cor.*)

Cor. (*Crosses to centre.*) The honour'd gods
 Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
 Supply'd with worthy men ! plant love among us !
 Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
 * Pennyworth.

And not our streets with war !

Men. Amen, amen ! A noble wish.

Sic. Draw near, ye people.

Cor. Shall I be charg'd no further than this present ?

Must all determine here ?

Sic. I do demand,

If you submit you to the people's voices,

Allow their officers, and are content

To suffer lawful censure for such faults

As shall be prov'd upon you.

Cor. I am content.

Men. Lo, citizens, he says, he is content :

The warlike service he has done, consider ;

Think on the wounds his body bears, which show

Like graves i'the holy church-yard.

Cor. Scratches with briars.—

What is the matter,

That being pass'd for consul with full voice,

I'm so dishonour'd, that the very hour

You take it off again ?

Sic. Answer to us.

Cor. Say then : 'tis true, I ought so.

Sic. We charge you, that you have contrived to take

From Rome all season'd* office, and to wind

Yourself into a power tyrannical ;

For which, you are a traitor to the people.

Cor. How ! Traitor ?

Men. Nay ; temperately :—your promise. (*To Cor.*)

Cor. The fires i'the lowest hell fold in the people !

Call me their traitor !—Thou injurious tribune !

Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,

In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in

Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say,

Thou liest, unto thee, with a voice as free

As I do pray the gods.

Sic. Mark you this, people ?

All. To the rock with him ; to the rock with him !

Sic. Peace.—

* Established and settled by time.

We need not put new matter to his charge :
What you have seen him do, and heard him speak,
Deserves the extremest death.

Bru. But since he hath
Serv'd well for Rome,—

Cor. What do you prate of service ?

Bru. I talk of that, that know it.

Cor. You ?—

Men. Is this
The promise that you made your mother ?

Com. Know,
I pray you,—

Cor. I'll know no further :
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying ;—pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word ;
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have t with saying, Good morrow.

Sic. For that he has
(As much as in him lies)* from time to time
Envy'd against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power ; as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it ; in the name o'the people,
And in the power of us the tribunes,
Even from this instant, banish him our city.

Com. Hear me, my masters, and my common
friends ;—

Bru. There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd,
As enemy to the people, and his country :
It shall be so.

All. It shall be so, it shall be so.

Cor. (*Rushes forward to the centre.*) Ye common
cry* of curs ! whose breath I hate
As reek o'the rotten fens,—whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air,—I banish you ;
And here remain with your uncertainty !

* Cry here signifies a troop, or pack.

Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !
 Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
 Fan you into despair ! Have the power still
 To banish your defenders ; till, at length,
 Your ignorance
 Deliver you, as most
 Abated* captives, to some nation
 That won you without blows !—(*Crosses to R.H. fol-
 lowed by Men. and Com.*)—Despising now
 For you, the city, thus I turn my back :
 There is a world elsewhere.

[*The people Shout, and all follow Coriolanus, R.H.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE V.—*Antium.*—*A Room in Aufidius's House.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, and VOLUSIUS, R.H.

Volu. Whence is it, Tullus, that our arms are
 stopp'd
 Upon the borders of the Roman state ?
 Why sleeps that spirit, whose heroic ardour
 Urg'd you to break the truce, and pour'd our host,
 From all the united cantons of the Volscians,
 On their unguarded frontier ? Such designs
 Brook not an hour's delay ; their whole success
 Depends on instant vigorous execution.

Auf. O, my Volusius ! thou, who art a soldier,
 A tried and brave one too, say, in thy heart
 Dost thou not scorn me ? Thou, who saw'st me bend
 Beneath the half-spent thunder of a foe,
 Warm from the conquest of Corioli.

Volu. True valour, Tullus,

* Dejected, subdued, depressed in spirit.

Lies in the mind the never-yielding purpose :
Nor heeds the blind award of giddy fortune:

Auf. My soul, my friend, my soul is all on fire ;
Thirst of revenge consumes me ; the revenge
Of generous emulation, not of hatred.
This happy Roman, this proud Marcius, haunts me.
Each troubled night, when slaves and captives sleep
Forgetful of their chains, I in my dreams
Anew am vanquish'd ; and, beneath his sword
With horror sinking, feel a ten-fold death,
The death of honour. But I will redeem,—
Yes, Marcius, I will yet redeem my fame.
To face thee once again is the great purpose
For which alone I live.—Till then, how slow,
How tedious, lags the time ! while shame corrodes
me

With many a bitter thought ; and injur'd honour,
Sick and desponding, preys upon itself.

Enter SEXTUS, R.H.

Ha ! why this haste ? You look alarm'd.

Sex. My lord,
One of exalted port, his visage hid,
Has plac'd himself beneath the statue of
The mighty Mars, and there majestic stands
In solemn silence.

Auf. Did you not ask him who, and what he was ?

Sex. My lord, I could not speak ; I felt appall'd,
As if the presence of some god had struck me.

Auf. Come, dastard, let me find this man of terrors.
[*Exeunt*, R.H.]

SCENE II.—*A Hall, with the Statue of Mars.*

CORIOLANUS, *discovered as described above.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, R.H.

Auf. Illustrious stranger,—for thy high demeanour
Bespeaks thee such,—who art thou ? What is thy name ?

Cor. A name unmusical to the Volscians ears,
And harsh in sound to thine. (*Uncovering his face.*)
Know'st thou me yet?

Auf. Thy face
Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel.—What's thy name?

Cor. (*Throwing off his cloak.*) My name is Caius
Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volscians,
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus.
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, have
Whoop'd me out of Rome. Now, this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth. 'Then if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that will revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee
straight,

And make my misery serve thy turn; so use it,
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee; for I will fight
Against my canker'd country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But if so be
Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou art tir'd: then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee:—

Which not to cut, would show thee but a fool;
Since I have ever followed thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.

Auf. O, Marcius, Marcius,
Each word thou'st spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy.
Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where against
My grained ash a hundred times hath broke,
And scar'd the moon with splinters! Here I clip

The anvil of my sword ; and do contest
 As hotly and as nobly with thy love,
 As ever in ambitious strength I did
 Contend against thy valour.

Cor. You bless me, gods !

Auf. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
 The leading of thine own revenges, take
 The one half of my commission ; and set down,—
 As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
 Thy country's strength and weakness,—thine own
 ways :

Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
 Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
 To fright them, ere destroy. But come, come in :
(*Crosses to L.H.*)

Let me commend thee first to those, that shall
 Say, *Yea*, to thy desires.—A thousand welcomes !
 And more a friend, than e'er an enemy ;
 Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand !—most
 welcome ! [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS, L.H.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him ;
 His remedies are tame.

Bru. We stood to't in good time. Is this Mene-
 nius ?

Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he : O, he is grown most kind
 Of late.—Hail, sir !

Enter MENENIUS, R.H.

Men. Hail to you both ! (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Sic. Your Coriolanus, sir, is not much miss'd
 But with his friends : the commonwealth doth stand ;
 And so would do, were he more angry at it.

Men. All's well, and might have been much better,
 if

He could have temporiz'd.

Sic. Where is he, hear you?

Men. Nay, I hear nothing; his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Bru. There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volséians with two several powers
Are entered in the Roman territories;
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before them.

Men. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;
Which were inshell'd, when Marcius stood for Rome,*
And durst not once peep out.

Enter APPIUS, R.H.

App. The nobles, in great earnestness, are going
All to the senate-house: some news is come,
That turns their countenances.

Sic. 'Tis this slave;—
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes:—his raising!
Nothing but his report!

App. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is delivered.

Sic. What more fearful?

App. It is spoke freely out of many mouths,
(How probable, I do not know,) that Marcius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome.

Sic. This is most likely!

Bru. Rais'd only, that the weaker sort may wish
Good Marcius home again.

Sic. The very trick on't.

Men. This is unlikely: (*Crosses to R.H.*)
He and Aufidius can no more atune†,
Than violentest contrariety.
Let's to the senate-house.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*

* Stood up in its defence.—† Unite, come to a reconciliation.

SCENE IV.—*A Plain, near Rome.**Enter R.H. U.E.**Two Men bearing Standards——Antium and Volsci.**Six Men, with drawn Swords, ranged two and two.**Sextus.**Four Men, with drawn swords, ranged two and two.**Navius.**Four Men, bearing Spears, ranged two and two.**Aruns.**Two Men bearing Spears.**Coriolanus.**Banners—Fish, Dragon, Hawk.**Fourteen Men bearing Spears, ranged two and two.*

HOW TO DRESS THE STAGE, AFTER THE PROCESSION.

*Two Men with Spears and Shields.**Do. Do. Do.**Do. Do. Do.**Do. Do. Do.**Do. Do. Do.**Two Men with Spears.**Two Men with Spears.**Banners—Hawk, Dragon and Fish.**Two Men with Spears.**Aruns.**Two Men with Spears.**Do. Do.**Navius.**Two Men with drawn Swords.**Do. Do.**Sextus.**Two Men with drawn Swords.**Do. Do.**Banners—Antium and Volsci.**Lucius.**Volusius.—Aufidius.—Coriolanus.**(Flourish of Trumpets.)*

Cor. No more ;—I merit not this lavish praise.
True, we have driven the Roman legions back,
Defeated and disgrac'd :—but what is done ?
Nothing, ye Volscians.—

Come on, my brave companions of the war,
Come, let us finish at one mighty stroke
The toil of lab'ring fate,—we will, or perish.—
While, noble Tullus, you protect the camp,
I with my troops, all chosen men of valour,
And well approv'd to day, will storm the city.

(*Trumpet sounds a parley, L.II.*)

Enter LUCIUS, L.II.

Luc. My lord, a herald is arriv'd from Rome,
To say, a deputation from the senate,
Attended by the ministers of heaven,
A venerable train of priests and flamens,
Is on the way, address'd to you.

Cor. To me !

What can this message mean ?—Stand to your arms,
Ye Volscian troops ; and let these Romans pass
Betwixt the low'ring frowns of double files.
What ! do they think so lightly of my wrongs,
To slake my vengeance with a few soft words ?
Come, fellow soldiers ; Tullus, come, and see
How I maintain the honours you have done me.

[*Flourish of Trumpets.—Exeunt Coriolanus attended by all but Aufidius and Volusius.*]

Volu. Are we not, Tullus, failing in our duty,
Not to attend our general ?

Auf. How ! what said'st thou ?

Volu. Methought, my lord, his parting orders were,
We should attend the triumph now preparing
O'er all his foes at once,—Romans and Volscians.—
Come, we shall give offence.

Auf. (*Aside.*) His words are daggers to my heart
I feel

Their truth, but am asham'd to own my folly.

Volu. O shame ! O infamy ! the thought consumes me !

To see a Roman
Borne on our shoulders to immortal fame,
Just in the happy moment that decided
The long dispute of ages, that, for which
Our generous ancestors had toil'd and bled :
To see him then step in, and steal our glory !
O, that we first had perish'd all ! A people,
Who cannot find in their own proper force
Their own protection, are not worth the saving.

Auf. It must have way ; I will no more suppress it,—(*Aside.*)

Know then, my valiant friend, no less than thee,
His conduct hurts me, and upbraids my folly.
I wake as from a dream. What dæmon mov'd me ?
What doating generosity, to exalt him
To the same level, nay, above myself ?
To yield him the command of half my troops ?
That, that was madness,
Was weak, was mean, unworthy of a man !—
How shall I from this labyrinth escape ?
Must it then be ? What cruel genius dooms me,
In war or peace, to creep beneath his fortune ?

Volu. That genius is thyself. If thou can'st bear
The very thought of stooping to this Roman,
Thou from that moment art his vassal, Tullus ;
By that thou dost acknowledge, parent nature
Has form'd him thy superior. But if, fix'd
Upon the base of manly resolution,
Thou say'st,—I will be free,—I will command,—
I and my country ;—then,—O, never doubt it,
We shall find means to crush this vain intruder :
Even I myself,—this hand ;—nay, hear me, Tullus ;—
'Tis not yet come to that, that last resource ;
I do not say, we should employ the dagger,
While other, better means are in our power.

Auf. No, my Volusius, fortune will not drive us,
Or I am much deceived, to that extreme :

We shall not want the strongest fairest plea,
 To give a solemn sanction to his fate;
 He will betray himself. Whate'er his rage
 Of passion talks, a weakness for his country
 Sticks in his soul, and he is still a Roman.
 Soon shall we see him tempted to the brink
 Of this sure precipice;—then down at once,
 Without remorse, we hurl him to perdition.

(*Trumpet sounds, L.H.*)

But hark,—the trumpet calls us to a scene
 I should detest; if not from hope we thence
 May gather matter to mature our purpose.

[*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE V.—*Rome.—A Street.*

Enter MENENIUS, L.H. meeting BRUTUS and SICINIUS,
R.H.

Men. O, you have made good work!

Bru. What news? What news?

Sic. Pray now, your news?

Men. You have made good work,
 You, and your apron-men; you that stood so much
 Upon the voice of occupation*, and
 The breath of garlic-eaters!

Sic. We're all undone, unless
 The noble man have mercy.

Men. Who shall ask it?

The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people
 Deserve such pity of him, as the wolf
 Does of the shepherds.

If he were putting to my house the brand
 That should consume it, I have not the face
 To say, '*Beseech you, cease.*—You have made fair
 hands,

You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!

Enter a Troop of CITIZENS, R.H. S.E.

Here come the clusters.—

* Occupation is here used for mechanics, men occupied in daily business.

You are they (*Crosses to them.*)
 That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
 Your stinking, greasy caps, in hooting at
 Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;
 And not a hair upon a soldier's head,
 Which will not prove a whip; as many coxcombs,
 As you threw caps up, will he tumble down,
 And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;
 If he could burn us all into one coal,
 We have deserv'd it.

3. *Cit.* For mine own part,
 When I said, *Banish him*, I said, 'twas pity.

2. *Cit.* And so did I.

1. *Cit.* And so did I! And, to say the truth, so did
 very many of us: that we did, we did for the best;
 and though we willingly consented to his banishment,
 yet it was against our will.

Men. You are goodly things,—you voices!—
 You have made
 Good work, you and your cry*.
 But here's Cominius; he will tell you news.

*Enter COMINIUS, and Six Senators, who pass over
 to L.H.*

Have you prevail'd? Will he have mercy on us?
 What hope has Rome yet? How did he receive you?

Com. He would not seem to know me.

Men. Do you hear? (*To the people.*)

Com. Yet one time he did call me by my name;
 I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops
 That we have bled together Coriolanus
 He would not answer to: forbad all names:
 He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
 'Till he had forg'd himself a name i' the fire
 Of burning Rome.

Men. Why, so; you've made good work:
 A pair of tribunes that have rack'd† for Rome,

* Alluding to a pack of hounds.—† To rack, means to harass by
 exactions.

To make coals cheap : a noble memory !

Com. I minded him, how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was least expected. He reply'd,
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punished.

Men. Very well ;
Could he say less ?

Com. I offered to awaken his regard
For his private friends. His answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome, musty chaff: He said, 'twas folly,
For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,
And still to nose the offence.

Men. For one poor grain
Or two ? I am one of those ; his mother, wife,
His child, and this brave fellow too, we are the grains
You are the musty chaff ; and you are smelt
Above the moon : we must be burnt for you.

Sic. Nay, pray, be patient : If you refuse your aid
In this so never-needed help, yet do not .
Upbraid us with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.

Men. No ; I'll not meddle.

Sic. I pray you, go to him.

Men. What should I do ?

Bru. Only make trial what your love can do,
For Rome, towards Marcius.

Com. He'll never hear him.

Sic. Not ?

Com. I tell you, he does sit in gold*, his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome ; and his injury
The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him :
'Twas very faintly he said, *Rise* ; dismissed me
Thus, with his speechless hand. What he would do,
He sent in writing after me ; what he would not,
Bound with an oath, to yield to his conditions :

* He is enthroned in all the pomp and pride of imperial splendour.

So, that all hope is vain,
 Unless his noble mother, and his wife ;
 Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
 For mercy to his country.

Men. See you yond' coign o'the capitol, yond' corner stone ?

Sic. Why, what of that ?

Men. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him.

Sic. Is it possible, that so short a time can alter the condition of a man ?

Men. There is differency between a grub, and a butterfly ; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon ; he has wings ; he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He lov'd his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me : and he no more remembers his mother now, than an eight year old horse. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him : there is no more mercy in him, than there is milk in a male tiger ; that shall our poor city find : and all this is long of you.

1. *Cit.* O doleful tidings !

2. *Cit.* O woeful day !

3. *Cit.* What will become of us ?

Omnes. Oh ! oh ! oh !

1. *Cit.* Let us seize the two tribunes that did banish him, and throw them down the Tarpeian rock.

Sic. O, good Menenius, save us !

Bru. Stand our friend !

Men. (*Crosses to L.H.*) Not I ; they may hang, drown, burn, or break your worthless necks from the rock, 'tis all one to me. [*Exit, L.H.*

All. Away with them, away with them !

Com. Hear me, fellow citizens !

Suspend awhile your anger, till you hear
 How the entreaties of his mother, wife,
 And our most noble matrons, work upon him ;
 They yet may bring us peace.

All. We will, we will.

Com. The Roman Gods prosper their embassy!

[*Exeunt, Brutus, Sicinius, Cominius, and Senators,*
L.H. Citizens, R.H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Volscian Camp.*

DISPOSITION OF THE STAGE WHEN THE ACT COMMENCES.

Twelve Lictors.

Ten Men with Spears and Shields.

Two Battering Rams.

Eight Men with Swords and Shields.

Six Men with Spears and Shields.

Banners—Fish, Antium, Hawk, Volsci and Fame.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Two Men with Spears.

Raven.

Ram.

Appius.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Raised Seats for Six Senators.

Pegasus.

Six Men with Swords and Shields.

Fulvius.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Lion.

Dragon.

Volusius.

Sextus.

Four Men with Spears and Shields.

State Chairs.

Aufidius.

Sphinx.

Coriolanus.

Navius.

Four Men with Spears and Shields.

Goat.
Lucius.

Two Men with Spears and Shields.

Four Men with Spears and Shields.

Antium.

Boar.
Aruns.

R.H.

L.H.

Cor. Here, noble Tullus, sit, and judge my conduct;

Nor spare to check me, if I act amiss.

Auf. Marcius, the Volscian fate is in thy hand.

(*Music at a distance, R.H.U.E.*)

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Roman Ladies, in mourning habits,

R.H. U.E.

Cor. My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould

Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand
The grand child to her blood. But, out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous, to be obstinate.—

(*Virgilia bows.*)

What is that curt'sy worth or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? (*Volumnia bows.*)

My mother bows;

As if Olympus to a mole hill should

In supplication nod: and my young boy

Hath an aspect of intercession, which

Great nature cries, *Deny not*.—Let the Volscians

Plough Rome, and harrow Italy;

I'll stand,

As if a man were author of himself,

And knew no other kin.

Vir. My lord and husband!

Cor. I melt, and am not
Of stronger earth than others.—

O, a kiss,
 Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge !
 Now by the jealous queen of heav'n*, that kiss
 I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip
 Hath virgin'd it e'er since.—You gods! I prate,
 And the most noble mother of the world,
 Leave unsaluted : sink, my knee, i' the earth ;
(Kneels.)

Of thy deep duty more impression show
 Than that of common sons.

Vol. O, stand up bless'd!—
 Thou art my warrior ;
 I help to frame thee.—Do you know this lady?
(Pointing to Valeria.)

Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,
 The moon of Rome ; chaste as the icicle,
 That's curd'd by the frost from purest snow,
 And hangs on Dian's temple.

Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
(Presenting young Marcius.)
 Which by the interpretation of full time
 May show like all yourself.

Cor. The god of soldiers,
 With the consent of supreme Jove†, inform
 Thy thoughts with nobleness ; that thou may'st prove
 To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars
 Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw‡,
 And saving those that eye thee !

Vol. Your knee, sirrah. (Boy kneels.)

Cor. That's my brave boy.

Vol. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
 Are suitors to you.

Cor. I beseech you, peace :
 Or, if you'd ask, remember this before ;
 The things I have forsworn to grant, may never
 Be held by you denials ?—Do not bid me,

* That is, by *Juno*, the guardian of marriage, and consequently the
 avenger of connubial perfidy.

† This is inserted with great decorum. Jupiter was the tutelary
 god of Rome.

‡ That is, every gust, every storm.

Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
 Again with Rome's mechanics :—tell me not
 Wherein I seem unnatural :—desire not
 To allay my rages and revenges, with
 Your colder reasons.

Vol. O, no more, no more !
 You have said, you will not grant us any thing ;
 For we have nothing else to ask, but that
 Which you deny already : yet we will ask ;
 That, if you fail in our request, the blame
 May hang upon your hardness : therefore hear us.

Cor. Aufidius, and you Volscians, mark ; for we'll
 Hear nought from Rome in private.—(*Sits.*)—Your
 request? (*To Volumnia.*)

Vol. Think with thyself,
 How more unfortunate than all living women
 Are we come hither :—
 For either thou
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
 With manacles through our streets ; or else
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin ;
 And bear the palm, for having bravely shed
 Thy wife and children's blood.

Cor. I have sat too long. (*Offers to rise.*)

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volscians whom you serve, you might condemn us
 As poisonous of your honour ; no : our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them : while the Volscians
 May say, *This mercy we have show'd* ; the Romans,
This we receiv'd ; and each in either side
 Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, *Be bless'd*
For making up this peace !

Cor. Those walls contain the most corrupt of men,
 Insolent foes to worth, the foes of virtue.

Vol. Daughter, speak you ;
 He cares not for your weeping,—Speak thou, boy ;
 Perhaps, thy childishness will move him more
 Than can our reasons. There is no man in the world

More bound to his mother, ye here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life
 Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy ;
 When she, (poor hen !) fond of no second brood,
 Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
 Laden with honours.

Auf. See, see, Volusius, how the strong emotions
 Of powerful nature shake his inmost soul !
 See, how they tear him !—If he long resist them,
 He is a god, or something worse than man.

(*Aside to Volusius.*)

Vol. He turns away :

Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.

Nay, behold us : (*All Kneel.*)

This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
 But kneels, and holds up hands, for fellowship,
 Does reason* our petition with more strength,
 Than thou hast to deny't.—Come let us go : (*They rise.*)
 This fellow had a Volscian to his mother ;
 His wife is in Corioli, and his child
 Like him by chance :—yet give us our despatch :—
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Since, Coriolanus, thou dost still retain,
 In spite of all thy mother now has pleaded,
 Thy dreadful purpose ; ah, how much in vain
 Were it for me to join my supplications !
 The voice of thy Virgilia, once so pleasing,
 How shall it hope to touch the husband's heart,
 When proof against the tears of such a parent ?
 But I must weep.—O, permit me,
 To shed my gushing tears upon thy hand,
 And take my last farewell !

Cor. Leave me.

Vir. I obey.—How bitter thus to part,
 Upon such terms to part, perhaps for ever !
 But, tell me, ere I hence unroot my feet,
 When to my lonely home I shall return,—

Cor. Come and complete my happiness at Antium,

* Does argue for us and our petition.

You, and my honour'd mother :—

There shall you see with what respect the Volscians
Will treat the wife, and mother, of their general.

Vol. Treat us thyself with more respect, my son,
Nor dare to shock our ears with such proposals.
Shall we desert our country,—we,—who come
To plead her cause ?—Ah, no—a grave in Rome
Would better please me, than a throne at Antium.

Cor. Cease, cease, to torture me :
You only tear my heart, but cannot shake it.
By the immortal gods,—

Vir. O, vow not our destruction !

(Falling on her knees.)

Vol. Daughter, rise :

Let us no more before the Volscian people
Expose ourselves a spectacle of shame.—
Hear me, proud man !—I have
A heart as stout as thine. I came not hither,
To be sent back rejected, baffled, sham'd,
Hateful to Rome, because I am thy mother :
A Roman matron knows, in such extremes,
What part to take.—

Go, barbarous son ; go, double paricide ;
Rush o'er my corse to thy belov'd revenge !
Tread on the bleeding breast of her, to whom
Thou ow'st thy life !—Lo, thy first victim.

(Drawing a dagger.)

Cor. *(Starting from his chair and seizing her hand.)*

Ha !

What dost thou mean ?

Vol. To die, while Rome is free.

Cor. O, set not thus

My treacherous heart in arms against my reason.—
Here, here thy dagger will be well employ'd.—
Pity me, generous Volcians !—You are men—
Must it then be ?—My stifled words refuse
A passage to the throes that wring my heart.

Vol. Nay, if thou yieldest, yield like Coriolanus ;
And what thou do'st, do nobly.

Cor. There,—'tis done :—

Thine is the triumph, Nature !—Ah, Volumnia,

Rome by thy aid is sav'd,—but thy son lost!

Vol. He never can be lost, who saves his country.

Cor. Ye matrons, guardians of the Roman safety,
We grant the truce you ask.—
Volscians, we raise the siege.

*(Coriolanus turns to the Roman ladies, who retire
in the order they entered, R.H. U.E.)*

Auf. 'Tis as we wish'd, Volusius.—

But mark me well ;—one offer more

My honour bids me make to this proud man ;

If he reject it,

His blood be on his head. (To Volusius.)

Volu. Well, I obey. (To Aufidius.)

*(When Coriolanus returns, Volusius and the
officers, L.H. advance to centre of the Stage ;
three standards in centre come forward to
officers ; the bearers of swords and shields
also advance. Volsci and Fame, bearers of
spears, from R.H.U.E. advance.)*

Cor. I plainly, Tullus, by your looks perceive
You disapprove my conduct.

Auf. I mean not to assail thee with the clamour
Of loud reproaches and the war of words ;
But, pride apart, and all that can pervert
The light of steady reason, here to make
A candid fair proposal.

Cor. Speak, I hear thee.

Auf. I need not tell thee, that I have perform'd
My utmost promise. Thou hast been protected ;
Hast had thy amplest, most ambitious wish ;
Thy wounded pride is heal'd, thy dear revenge
Completely sated ; and, to crown thy fortune,
At the same time, thy peace with Rome restor'd.
Thou art no more a Volscian, but a Roman.
Return, return ; thy duty calls upon thee
Still to protect the city thou hast sav'd ;
It still may be in danger from our arms.
Retire : I will take care thou mayst with safety.

Cor. With safety ?—Heavens !—and think'st thou,
Coriolanus

Will stoop to thee for safety ?—No ! my safeguard

Is in myself, a bosom void of blame—
 O, 'tis an act of cowardice and baseness,
 To seize the very time my hands are fetter'd
 By the strong chain of former obligation,
 The safe, sure, moment to insult me.—gods!
 Were I now free, as on that day I was
 When at Corioli I tam'd thy pride,
 This had not been.

Auf. Thou speak'st the truth; it had not.
 O, for that time again! propitious gods,
 If you will bless me, grant it!—Know, for that,
 For that dear purpose, I have now propos'd
 Thou should'st return. I pray thee, Marcius, do it;
 And we shall meet again on nobler terms.

Cor. Till I have clear'd my honour in your council,
 And prov'd before them all, to thy confusion,
 The falsehood of thy charge; as soon in battle
 I would before thee fly, and howl for mercy,
 As quit the station they have here assigned me.

(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Auf. Thou canst not hope acquittal from the
 Volscians.

Cor. I do :—nay more, expect their approbation,
 Their thanks. I will obtain them such a peace
 As thou durst never ask; a perfect union
 Of their whole nation with imperial Rome,
 In all her privileges, all her rights;
 By the just gods, I will.—What would'st thou more?

Auf. What would I more, proud Roman? This
 I would,—

Fire the curst forest where these Roman wolves
 Haunt and infest their nobler neighbours round them;
 Extirpate from the bosom of this land
 A false perfidious people, who, beneath
 The mask of freedom, are a combination
 Against the liberty of human kind,—
 The genuine seed of outlaws and of robbers.

Cor. The seed of gods.—'Tis not for thee, vain
 boaster,—

'Tis not for such as thou,—so often spar'd
 By her victorious sword, to speak of Rome,

But with respect, and awful veneration.—
 Whate'er her blots, whate'er her giddy factions,
 There is more virtue in one single year
 Of Roman story, than your Volscian annals
 Can boast through all their creeping dark duration.

Auf. I thank thy rage:—this full displays the
 traitor.

Cor. Traitor!—how now?—

Auf. Ay, traitor, Marcius.

Cor. Marcius!

Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius; dost thou think
 I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
 Coriolanus, in Corioli?—

You lords and heads o'the state, perfidiously
 He has betray'd your business, and given up,
 For certain drops of salt, your city Rome
 (I say, your city,) to his wife and mother:
 Breaking his oath and resolution, like
 A twist of rotten silk; never admitting
 Counsel o'the war; but at his nurse's tears
 He whin'd and roar'd away your victory?
 That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
 Look'd wond'ring each at other.

Cor. Hear'st thou, Mars?

Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears.—

Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
 Too great for what contains it.—Boy!—
 Cut me to pieces, Volscians; men and lads,
 Stain all your edges on me.—Boy!—
 If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
 That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
 Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli:
 Alone I did it.—Boy!—But let us part;—
 Lest my rash hand should do a hasty deed
 My cooler thought forbids.

Auf. I court

The worst thy sword can do; while thou from me,
 Hast nothing to expect, but sore destruction;
 Quit then this hostile camp. Once more I tell thee,
 Thou art not here one single hour in safety.

Cor. O, that I had thee in the field,

With six Aufidiuses, or more, thy tribe,
To use my lawful sword,—

Volu. Insolent villain! (*Volusius and other Vol-
scian Officers draw, and kill Coriolanus.*)

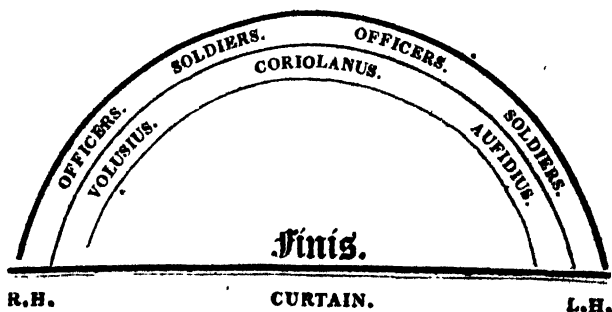
Auf. My lords when you shall know
The great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.—

My rage is gone,
And I am struck with sorrow.
Bear from hence his body.
Let him be regarded
As the most noble corse, that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.

Beat, beat the drum, that it speak mournfully :
(*Muffled drum.*)
Trail your steel pikes. (*the Army lower their spears
and ensigns.*)—Though in your city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory.

(*A dead march sounded.*)

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





MRS. EGERTON,

AS CLARA.

(Engraved by The Wright from an original drawing by Hageman)

Oxberry's Edition.

THE
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND,

A COMEDY;

By Dr. Hoadly.

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, AND STAGE DIRECTIONS,

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

Theatres Royal.

*REVISED BY OXBERRY, Comedian,
and*
London.

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Remarks.

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

THIS is a lively and interesting comedy, and deserves particular commendation for the neatness of its plot; it is indeed a play of manners, not of passions,—and therefore loses some of its original interest from the decay of those manners;—but this is a defect incident to greater writers than Dr. Hoadly. How much of the excellence of Jonson is lost to us from the change of habits! The artist, indeed, will discover the value of the portrait without any consideration beyond itself, but the common observer finds no merit but in its likeness to its original, and that being lost, it has to him no other value.

Ranger is a good humoured rake, one of that happy class of mortals, who, being enemies to no one but themselves, are the favourites of every body; the frankness, generosity, and eternal good-humour of this pleasant fellow, are more than enough to redeem his vices; indeed we almost suspect that these vices may in some measure, have helped him to his high state of favour; “the ladies are bitter bad judges in these cases, Mr. Peachum,”

Jacintha, and Mrs. Strictland, and the sprightly Clarinda, seem to have been drawn upon Pope’s principle, “most women have no character at all;” this is indeed a fault, for on the stage, though not in the world, a bad character is better than no character at all.

The Suspicious Husband himself, is a copy of Ben Jonson’s Kitey, and we hope not to be accused of unreasonable severity, if we say it is a very feeble copy.

To the plot, too much praise cannot be given; some faults indeed might be pointed out, but where there is so much real excellence, we shall not stoop to the censure of petty errors; it is admirably

worked up, and as admirably resolved ; this is in truth the great merit of the piece, and in this consists the secret of its success, a success, which as it is deserved, is likely to be lasting.

Dr. Benjamin Hoadly, eldest son of the Bishop of Winchester, was born February 16, 1705-6, in Broad Street, and was educated at Dr. Newcome's, at Hackney, and Corpus Christi College, Cambridge ; being admitted Pensioner, April 8, 1722. Here he took a degree in physic in 1727 ; and particularly applied himself to mathematical studies. In 1728, he received his degree of M.D. He was F.R.S. very young ; was made registrar of Hereford, while his father filled that see ; and was appointed physician to his majesty's household so early as June 9, 1742. It is remarkable, that he was for some years physician to both the households together ; having been appointed to that of the Prince of Wales, January 4, 1745-6. He married, first, Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Betts, Esq. of Suffolk, counsellor at law, by whom he had one son, Benjamin, who died an infant. Second, Ann, daughter and coheirress of the Honourable General Armstrong, by whom he left no issue. He died in the life-time of his father, August 10, 1757, at his house at Chelsea. His Dramatic Works are *The Suspicious Husband*.—C. *The Tatler*.—C.

PROLOGUE.

• WHILE other culprits brave it to the last,
Nor beg for mercy till the judgment's past ;
Poets alone, as conscious of their crimes,
Open their trials with imploring rhymes.
Thus cramm'd with flattery and low submission,
Each trite dull prologue is the bard's petition.
A stale device to calm the critic's fury,
And bribe at once the judges and the jury.

But what avail such poor repeated arts ?
The whimp'ring scribbler ne'er can touch your hearts ;
Nor ought an ill-tim'd pity to take place,—
Fast as they rise, destroy th' increasing race :
The vermin else will run the nation o'er :—
By saving one you breed a million more.

Though disappointed authors rail and rage
At fancied parties, and a senseless age,
Yet still has justice triumph'd on the stage.
Thus speaks and thinks the author of to-day ;
And saying this, has little more to say.
He asks no friend his partial zeal to show,
Nor fears the groundless censures of a foe :
He knows no friendship can protect the fool,
Nor will an audience be a party's tool.
'Tis inconsistent with a free born spirit,
To side with folly, or to injure merit.
By your decision he must fall or stand,
Nor, though he feels the lash, will blame the hand.

}

EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

THOUGH the young smarts I see begin to sneer,
And the old sinners cast a wicked leer,
Be not alarm'd, ye fair—You've nought to fear.
No wanton hint, no loose ambiguous sense,
Shall flatter vicious taste at your expense.
Leaving, for once, these shameless arts in vogue,
We give a fable for the epilogue.

}

An ass there was, our author bade me say,
Who needs must write—He did—and wrote a play.
The parts were cast to various beasts and fowl;
Their stage a barn ;—the manager an owl.
The house was cramm'd at six, with friends and foes ;
Rakes, wits, and critics, citizens, and beaux.
These characters appear'd in different shapes
Of tigers, foxes, horses, bulls, and apes ;
With others too, of lower rank and station:
A perfect abstract of the brute creation.
Each, as he felt, mark'd out the author's faults,
And thus the connoisseurs express'd their thoughts.
The critic-curs first snarl'd—the rules are broke,
Time, place, and action sacrific'd to joke.
The goats cry'd out, 'twas formal, dull, and chaste—
Not writ for beasts of gallantry and taste.
The horned cattle were in piteous taking,
At fornication, rapes, and cuckold-making.
The tigers swore he wanted fire and passion ;
The apes condemn'd—because it was the fashion.
The generous steeds allow'd him proper merit :
Here mark'd his faults, and there approv'd his spirit.

While brother bards bray'd forth with usual spleen,
And as they heard, exploded every scene.

When Reynard's thoughts were ask'd, the shrugging sage,
Fam'd for hypocrisy, and worn with age,
Condemn'd the shameless licence of the stage.

}

At which the monkey skipp'd from box to box,
And whisper'd round the judgment of the fox;
Abus'd the moderns; talk'd of Rome and Greece;
Bilk'd ev'ry box-keeper; and damn'd the piece.

Now ev'ry fable has a moral to it—

Be churchman, statesman, any thing—but poet.

In law, or physie, quack in what you will,

Cant and grimace conceal the want of skill;

Secure in these, his gravity may pass—

But here no artifice can hide the ass.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is two hours and forty-three minutes. The first act occupies the space of thirty minutes;—the second, thirty;—the third, thirty-five;—the fourth, thirty-eight;—the fifth, thirty. The half price commences, generally, at about a quarter after nine.

Stage Directions.

By R.H..... is meant..... Right Hand.
L.H..... Left Hand.
S.E..... Second Entrance.
U.E..... Upper Entrance.
M.D..... Middle Door.
D.F..... Door in flat.
R.H.D..... Right Hand Door.
L.H.D..... Left Hand Door.

Costume.

STRICTLAND.

Brown coat, white waistcoat and black breeches.

BELLAMY.

Black,—ibid

FRANKLY.

Brown,—ibid.

RANGER.

First dress.—Suit of Black.—Second dress.—Brown,—ibid.

JACK MEGGOT.

Grey coat, white waistcoat and breeches.

BUCKLE.

Blue,—ibid.

TESTER.

Old fashioned livery.

Servants, Chairmen, &c.—Livery, &c. to correspond.

MRS. STRICTLAND.

White satin under dress, with white leno upper, trimmed with white satin.

CLARINDA.

First dress.—White satin pelisse.—Second.—Vide portrait.

JACINTHA.

First dress.—Blue satin, trimmed with white lace.—Second dress.—Blue coat, white waistcoat, black pantaloons, and Opera hat.—Third dress.—White crape frock, festooned at the bottom with silk cord tassels, and white satin slip.

LUCETTA.

Pink sarsnet dress, trimmed with brown, white muslin apron, trimmed with fringe.

LANDLADY.

Buff chambray gown.

MILLINER.

White dress, and silk scarf.

MAID.

Coloured gown.

Persons Represented.

| | 1819-20. <i>Drury Lane.</i> | <i>Covent Garden.</i> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Strickland</i> | Mr. Pope. | Mr. Egerton. |
| <i>Ranger</i> | Mr. Elliston. | Mr. Jones. |
| <i>Frankly</i> | Mr. Penley. | Mr. Brunton. |
| <i>Bellamy</i> | Mr. Barnard | Mr. Claremont. |
| <i>Jack Meggot</i> | Mr. Russell. | Mr. Farley. |
| <i>Tester</i> | Mr. Knight. | Mr. Simmons. |
| <i>John</i> | Mr. West. | Mr. Holland. |
| <i>Thomas</i> | Mr. Buxton. | Mr. Trueman. |
| <i>George</i> | Mr. Elsworth. | Mr. Louis |
| <i>Simon</i> | Mr. Chatterley. | Mr. Jefferies. |
| <i>Buckle</i> | Mr. Vining. | Mr. Menage. |
| <i>William</i> | Mr. Miller. | Mr. Atkins. |
| <i>James</i> | Mr. Jameson. | Mr. Sarjant. |
| <i>Chairmen</i> | { Mr. Maddocks. | { Mr. Wilde. |
| | { Mr. Appleby. | { Mr. Powers. |
| <i>Mrs. Strickland</i> | Mrs. Orger. | Miss Logan. |
| <i>Clarinda</i> | Mrs. Edwin. | Mrs. H. Johnston. |
| <i>Jacintha</i> | Mrs. Mardyn. | Miss Norton. |
| <i>Landlady</i> | Mrs. Margerum. | Mrs. Emery. |
| <i>Milliner</i> | Mrs. Scott. | Miss Ridgway. |
| <i>Lucetta</i> | Miss Kelly. | Mrs. Gibbs. |
| <i>Jenny</i> | Mrs. Chatterley. | Miss Cox. |
| <i>Fanny</i> | Miss Cooke. | Mrs. Bologna. |

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Ranger's Chambers in the Temple.*

*A knocking is heard at the Door for some Time ;
when RANGER enters, R.H. having let himself in.*

Ran. ONCE more I am got safe to the Temple.—
Let me reflect a little. I have sat up all night ; I have
my head full of bad wine, and the noise of oaths, dice,
and the damn'd tingling of tavern bells ; my spirits
jaded, and my eyes sunk in my head : and all this for
the conversation of a company of fellows I despise.—
Their wit lies only in obscenity, their mirth in noise,
and their delight in a box and dice. Honest Ranger,
take my word for it, thou art a mighty silly fellow.

Enter a Servant, L.H.

Where have you been, rascal ? If I had not had the key
in my pocket, I must have waited at the door in this
dainty dress.

Serv. I was only below, brushing your honour's
coat.

Ran. Well, get breakfast.—Why, how like a raking dog do you look, compared to that spruce sober gentleman! (*Aside.*) Go, you batter'd devil, and be made fit to be seen.

(*Throwing his Hat to the Servant.*)

Serv. 'Egad, my master's very merry this morning.

[*Aside, and Exit, L.H.*]

Ran. And now for the law. (*Sits down and reads.*)

Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd,

That Cloe's false and common ;

By heav'n I all along believ'd,

She was a very woman ;

As such I lik'd, as such caress'd ;

She still was constant when possess'd ;

She could do more for no man.

Honest Congreve was a man after my own heart.

Enter a Servant, L.H.

Have you been for the money this morning, as I ordered you ?

Serv. No, sir ; you bade me go before you was up ; I did not know your honour meant before you went to bed.

Ran. None of your jokes, I pray ; but to business. Go to the coffee-house, and inquire if there has been any letter or message left for me.

Serv. I shall sir.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Ran. (*Reads.*) *You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind,*

I take her body, you her mind ;

Which has the better bargain ?

Oh that I had such a soft deceitful fair to lull my senses to their desired sleep. (*Knocking at R.H.D.*) Come in,

Enter SIMON, R.H.D.

Oh, master Simon, is it you ? How long have you been in town ?

Sim. Just come, sir; and but for a little time neither; and yet I have as many messages as if we were to stay the whole year round. Here they are, all of them. (*Pulls out a number of Cards.*) And among them one for your honour.

Ran. (*Reads.*) *Clarinda's compliments to her cousin Ranger, and should be glad to see him for ever so little a time that he can be spared from the more weighty business of the law.*—Ha, ha, ha! the same merry girl I ever knew her.

Sim. My lady is never sad, sir.

(*Knocking at R.H.D.*)

Ran. Pr'ythee, Simon, open the door.

Enter Milliner, R.H.D.

Well child,—and who are you?

Mil. Sir, my mistress gives her service to you, and has sent you home the linen you bespoke.

Ran. Well, Simon, my service to your lady, and let her know I will most certainly wait upon her. I am a little busy, Simon—and so—

Sim. Ah, you're a wag, master Ranger, you're a wag;—but mum for that. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Ran. I swear, my dear, you have the prettiest pair of eyes—the loveliest pouting lips—I never saw you before.

Mil. No, sir! I was always in the shop.

Ran. Were you so? Well, and what does your mistress say?—The devil fetch me, child, you look'd so prettily that I could not mind one word you said.

Mil. Lard, sir, you are such another gentleman! Why she says, she is sorry she could not send them sooner. Shall I lay them down?

Ran. No, child; give 'em to me.—Dear, little, smiling angel— (*Catches and kisses her.*)

Mil. I beg, sir, you would be civil.

Ran. Civil! 'Egad, I think I am very civil.

(*Kisses her again.*)

Re-enter a Servant, with BELLAMY, R.H.D.

Ser. Sir, Mr. Bellamy. [*Exit, L.H.*

Ran. Damn your impertinence. (*Aside.*)—Oh, Mr. Bellamy, your servant. (*Mil. Crosses behind to R.H.D.*)

Mil. What shall I say to my mistress?

Ran. (*In the Centre.*) Bid her make half a dozen more: but be sure you bring them home yourself.—(*Exit Milliner, R.H.D.*) Pshaw! Plague! Mr. Bellamy, how should you like to be serv'd so yourself?

Bel. How can you, Ranger, for a minute's pleasure, give an innocent girl the pain of heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest blush upon her cheek convinces me she is honest.

Ran. May be so. I was resolv'd to try, however, had not you interrupted the experiment.

Bel. Fie, Ranger, ! will you never think?

Ran. Yes, but I can't be always a thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy, and without something now and then to amuse and relax, it would be too much for my brain, I promise ye.—But I am a mighty sober fellow grown. Here have I been at it these three hours, but the wenches will never let me alone.

Bel. Three hours! Why do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

Ran. Rat your inquisitive eyes. *Ex pede Herculem.* 'Egad, you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment return'd from the tavern. What! Frankly here too!

Enter FRANKLY, R.H.D.

Frank. My boy, Ranger, I am heartily glad to see you; Bellamy, let me embrace you; you are the person I want; I have been at your lodgings and was directed hither.

Ran. It is to him then I am oblig'd for this visit; but with all my heart. He is the only man to whom I don't care how much I am obliged.

Bel. Your humble servant, sir.

Frank. You know, Ranger, I want no inducement to be with you. But—you look sadly—What—no merciless jade has—has she?

Ran. No, no; sound as a roach, my lad. I only got a little too much liquor last night, which I have not slept off yet.

Bel. Thus, Frankly, it is every day. All the morning his head aches; at noon he begins to clear up; towards evening he is good company; and all night he is carefully providing for the same course the next day.

Ran. Why, I must own, my ghostly father, I did relapse a little last night, just to furnish out a decent confession for the day.

Frank. And he is now doing penance for it. Were you his confessor indeed, you could not well desire more.

Ran. Charles, he sets up for a confessor with the worst grace in the world. Here has he been reprov-ing me for being but decently civil to my milliner. Plague! because the coldness of his constitution makes him insensible of a fine woman's charms, every body else must be so too.

Bel. I am no less sensible of their charms than you are, though I cannot kiss every woman I meet, or fall in love, as you call it, with every face which has the bloom of youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your pleasures.

Frank. My dear friend, this is very pretty talking! but let me tell you, it is in the power of the very first glance from a fine woman utterly to disconcert all your philosophy.

Bel. It must be from a fine woman then, and not such as are generally reputed so. And it must be a thorough acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an impression on my heart.

Ran. Would I could see it once! for when a man has been all his life hoarding up a stock, without allowing himself common necessities, it tickles me to

the soul to see him lay it all out upon a wrong bottom, and become bankrupt at last.

Bel. Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the minute I find a woman capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, with good sense enough to be always easy, and good nature enough to like me, I will immediately put it to the trial, which of us shall have the greatest share of happiness from the sex, you or I.

Ran. By marrying her, I suppose? Capable of friendship, love, and tenderness! ha, ha, ha! that a man of your sense should talk so. If she be capable of love, 'tis all I require of my mistress; and as every woman, who is young, is capable of love, I am very reasonably in love with every young woman I meet. My Lord Coke, in a case I read this morning, speaks my sense.

Bel. and Frank. My Lord Coke?

Ran. Yes, my Lord Coke. What he says of one woman, I say of the whole sex:

*I take their bodies, you their minds;
Which has the better bargain?*

Frank. There is no arguing with so great a lawyer. Suppose therefore we adjourn the debate to some other time. I have some serious business with Mr. Bellamy, and you want sleep, I am sure.

Ran. Sleep! mere loss of time and hindrance of business.—We men of spirit, sir, are above it.

Bel. Whither shall we go?

Frank. Into the Park. My chariot is at the door.

Bel. Then if my servant calls, you'll send him after us?

[*Exeunt Bel. and Frank, R.H.D.*]

Ran. I will. (*Looks at the Card.*)—Clarinda's compliments—A plague on this head of mine! never once to ask where she was to be found. It's plain she is not one of us, or I should not have been so remiss (my inquiries. No matter; I shall meet her in my
ks.

Re-enter a SERVANT, R.H.D.

Serv. There is no letter nor message sir.

Ran. Then my things to dress. [*Exit Servant, L.H.*]

I take her body, you her mind;

Which has the better bargain?

[*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Chamber.*

*Enter MRS. STRICTLAND, R.H; meeting JACINTHA,
L.H.D.*

Mrs. S. Good morrow, my dear Jacintha.

Jac. Good morrow to you, madam. I have brought my work, and intend to sit with you this morning. I hope you have got the better of your fatigue. Where is Clarinda? I should be glad if she would come and work with us.

Mrs. S. She work! she is too fine a lady to do any thing. She is not stirring yet;—we must let her have her rest. People of her waste of spirits require more time to recruit again.

Jac. It is pity she should be ever tired with what is so agreeable to every body else. I am prodigiously pleas'd with her company.

Mrs. S. And when you are better acquainted, you will be still more pleas'd with her. You must rally her upon her partner at Bath; for I fancy part of her rest has been disturbed on his account.

Jac. Was he really a pretty fellow?

Mrs. S. That I can't tell; I did not dance myself, and so did not much mind him. You must have the whole story from herself.

Jac. Oh, I warrant ye, I get it all out. None are so proper to make discoveries in love, as those who are in the secret themselves.

Enter LUCETTA, L.H.D.

Luc. Madam, (*To Jac.*)—Mr. Strictland is inquiring for you. Here has been Mr. Buckle with a letter from his master, which has made him very angry.

Jac. Mr. Bellamy said indeed he would try him once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Tell your master I am here. [*Exit Lucetta, L.H.D.*] What signifies fortune, when it only makes us slaves to other people?

Mrs. S. Do not be uneasy, my Jacintha. You shall always find a friend in me; but as for Mr. Strictland, I know not what ill temper hangs about him lately;—nothing satisfies him. You saw how he received us when we came off our journey. Though Clarinda was so good company, he was barely civil to her, and downright rude to me.

Jac. I cannot help saying I did observe it.

Mrs. S. I saw you did. Hush! he's here.

Enter STRICTLAND, L.H.D.

Strict. Oh, your servant, madam! (*To Jac.*) Here, I have received a letter from Mr. Bellamy, wherein he desires I would once more hear what he has to say. You know my sentiment; nay, so does he.

Jac. For heaven's sake consider, sir, this is no new affair, no sudden start of passion: we have known each other long. My father valued and loved him, and I am sure, were he alive, I should have his consent.

Strict. Don't tell me. Your father would not have you marry against his will, neither will I against mine. I am your father now.

Jac. And you take a fatherly care of me.

Strict. I wish I had never had any thing to do with you.

Jac. You may easily get rid of the trouble.

Strict. By listening, I suppose, to the young gentleman's proposals?

Jac. Which are very reasonable, in my opinion.

Strict. Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very modest gentleman he is that proposes them! A fool, to expect a lady of thirty thousand pounds fortune should, by the care and prudence of her guardian, be thrown away upon a young fellow not worth three hundred a year. (*Crosses to Centre.*)—He thinks being in love is an excuse for this; but I am not in love: what does he think will excuse me?

Mrs. S. Well, but Mr. Strictland, I think the gentleman should be heard.

Strict. Well, well, seven o'clock's the time; and if the man has had the good fortune, since I saw him last, to persuade somebody or other to give him a better estate, I give him my consent, not else. His servant waits below: you may tell him I shall be at home. [*Exit Jacintha, L.H.D.*]—But where is your friend, your other half, all this while? I thought you could not have breath'd a minute without your Clarinda.

Mrs. S. Why the truth is, I was going to see what makes her keep her chamber so long.

Strict. Lookye, Mrs. Strictland, you have been asking for money this morning. In plain terms, not one shilling shall pass through these fingers, till you have cleared my house of this Clarinda.

Mrs. S. How can her innocent gaiety have offended you? She is a woman of honour, and has as many good qualities—

Strict. As women of honour generally have. I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

Mrs. S. But, sir—

Strict. But, madam;—Clarinda, nor e'er a rake of fashion in England, shall live in my family to debauch it.

Mrs. S. Sir, she treated me with so much civility in the country, that I thought I could not do less than invite her to spend as much time with me in town as

her engagements would permit. I little imagined you could have been displeased at my having so agreeable a companion.

Strict. There was a time when I was company enough for leisure hours.

Mrs. S. There was a time when every word of mine was sure of meeting with a smile; but those happy days, I know not why, have long been over.

Strict. I cannot bear a rival even of your own sex. I hate the very name of female friends. No two of you can ever be an hour by yourselves, but one or both are the worse for it.

Mrs. S. Dear Mr. Strictland—

Strict. This I know, and will not suffer.

Mrs. S. It grieves me, sir, to see you so much in earnest: but to convince you how willing I am to make you easy in every thing, it shall be my request to her to remove immediately. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Strict. Do it:—harkye—your request?—Why yours? 'tis mine—my command—tell her so. I will be master of my own family, and I care not who knows it.

Mrs. S. You fright me, sir.—But it shall be as you please. [*Exit, in Tears, L.H.*]

Strict. Ha! have I gone too far? I am not master of myself. Mrs. Strictland!

Re-enter MRS. STRICTLAND, L.H.D.

Understand me right. I do not mean, by what I have said, that I suspect your innocence; but by crushing this growing friendship all at once, I may prevent a train of mischief which you do not foresee. I was perhaps, too harsh, therefore do it in your own way; but let me see the house fairly rid of her. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mrs. S. His earnestness in this affair amazes me; I am sorry I made this visit to Clarinda; and yet I'll answer for her honour. What can I say to her? Necessity must plead in my excuse;—for at all events, Mr. Strictland must be obeyed. [*Exit, L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*St. James's Park.**Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY, L.H.*

Bel. Is love the secret Ranger is not fit to hear? In my mind, he would prove the more able counselor. And is all the gay indifference of my friend at last reduced to love?

Frank. Even so.—Never was prude more resolute in chastity and ill nature, than I was fixed with indifference: but love has rais'd me from that inactive state above the being of a man.

Bel. Faith, Charles, I begin to think it has: but pray bring this rapture into order a little, and tell me regularly, how, where, and when.

Frank. If I was not most unreasonably in love, those horrid questions would stop my mouth at once; but as I am armed against reason—I answer—at Bath, on Tuesday, she danced and caught me.

Bel. Danced!—and was that all? But who is she? What is her name? Her fortune? where does she live?

Frank. Hold! hold! not so many hard questions; have a little mercy. I know but little of her, that's certain! but all I do know you shall have. That evening was the first of her appearing at Bath; the moment I saw her, I resolved to ask the favour of her hand; but the easy freedom with which she gave it, and her unaffected good humour during the whole night, gained such a power over my heart, as none of her sex could ever boast before. I waited on her home, and the next morning, when I went to pay the usual compliments, the bird was flown; she had set out for London two hours before, and in a chariot and six, you rogue.

Bel. But was it her own, you rogue?

Frank. That I don't know; but it looks better than being dragg'd to town in the stage. That day and the next I spent in inquiries. I waited on the ladies who

came with her; they knew nothing of her. So, without learning either her name or fortune, I e'en call'd for my boots, and rode post after her.

Bel. And how do you find yourself after your journey?

Frank. Why, as yet, I own I am but upon a cold scent: but a woman of her sprightliness and gentility cannot but frequent all public places; and when once she is found, the pleasure of the chase will over-pay the pains of rousing her. Oh, Bellamy! there was something peculiarly charming in her, that seem'd to claim my further acquaintance; and if in the other more familiar parts of life she shines with that superior lustre, and at last I win her to my arms, how shall I bless my resolution in pursuing her.

Bel. But if at last she should prove unworthy—

Frank. I would endeavour to forget her.

Bel. Promise me that, Charles, (*Takes his Hand.*) and I allow—But we are interrupted. (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Enter JACK MEGGOT, R.H.U.E.

J. Meg. Whom have we here? My old friend, Frankly! thou art grown a mere antique since I saw thee. How hast thou done these five hundred years?
(*In Centre.*)

Frank. Even as you see me; well, and at your service ever.

J. Meg. Ha! who's that? (*Apart to Frankly.*)

Frank. A friend of mine. (*Crosses to Centre.*) Mr. Bellamy, this is Jack Meggot, sir, as honest a fellow as any in life.

J. Meg. Pho! pr'ythee! (*Crosses to Centre.*) Charles—Don't be silly—Sir, I am your humble: any one who is a friend of my Frankly's, I am proud of embracing.

Bel. Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your civility.

J. Meg. Oh, sir!—Well, Charles; what dumb?—Come, come, you may talk, though you have nothing to say, as I do. Let us hear; where have you been?

Frank. Why, for this last week, Jack, I have been at Bath.

J. Meg. Bath! the most ridiculous place in life! amongst tradesmen's wives who hate their husbands, and people of quality that would rather go to the devil than stay at home;—people of no taste, no goût; and for divertimenti, if it were not for the puppet-show, la vertu would be dead amongst them. But the news, Charles; the ladies—I fear your time hung heavy on your hands, by the small stay you made there.

Frank. Faith, and so it did, Jack: the ladies are grown such idiots in love. The cards have so debauched their five senses, that love, almighty love himself, is utterly neglected.

J. Meg. It is the strangest thing in life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith, Charles, to tell you a secret which I don't care if all the world knows, I am almost surfeited with the services of the ladies; the modest ones I mean. The vast variety of duties they expect, as dressing up to the fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable hours, drinking fashionable liquors, and fifty other such irregular niceties, so ruin a man's pocket and constitution, that 'fore gad, he must have the estate of a duke, and the strength of a gondolier, who would list himself into their service.

Frank. A free confession truly, Jack, for one of your coat.

Bel. The ladies are obliged to you. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Enter BUCKLE, with a Letter to BELLAMY, L.H. who retires up the Stage and Reads it.

J. Meg. Oh, lard, Charles! I have had the greatest misfortune in life since I saw you; poor Otho, that I brought from Rome with me, is dead.

Frank. Well, well, get you another, and all will be well again.

J. Meg. No: the rogue broke me so much china, and gnaw'd my Spanish-leather shoes so filthily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

Bel. (To Buc.) Exactly at seven! Run back and assure

him I will not fail. [*Exit Buckle, L.H.*] Dead! (*Advancing.*) Pray who was the gentleman?

J. Meg. This gentleman was my monkey, sir; an odd sort of a fellow, that used to divert me, and pleased every body so at Rome, that he always made one in our conversations. But, Mr. Bellamy, I saw a servant; I hope no engagement, for you two positively shall dine with me: I have the finest macaroni in life. Oblige me so far.

Bel. Sir, your servant; what say you, Frankly?

J. Meg. Pho! plague! Charles, you shall go. My aunts think you begin to neglect them! and old maids, you know, are the most jealous creatures in life.

Frank. Ranger swears they can't be maids, they are so good-natured. Well, I agree, on condition I may eat what I please, and go away when I will.

J. Meg. Ay, ay, you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? My post-chaise won't carry us all.

Frank. My chariot is here, and I will conduct Mr. Bellamy.

Bel. Mr. Meggot, I beg pardon, I can't possibly dine out of town; I have an engagement early in the evening.

J. Meg. Out of town! No, my dear, I live just by. I see one of the dilettanti, (*Crosses to L.H.*) I would not miss speaking to for the universe. And so I expect you at three. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Frank. Ha, ha, ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty miles to go post for a spoonful of macaroni?

Bel. A special acquaintance I have made to-day!

Frank. For all this, Bellamy, he has a heart worthy your friendship. He spends his estate freely; and you cannot oblige him more than by showing him how he can be of service to you.

Bel. Now you say something. It is the heart, Frankly, I value in a man.

Frank. Right;—and there's a heart even in a woman's breast that is worth the purchase, or my judg-

ment has deceived me. Dear Bellamy, I know your concern for me; see her first, and then blame me if you can.

Bel. So far from blaming you, Charles, that if my endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the bushes with you.

Frank. That I am afraid will not do; for you know less of her than I: but if, in your walks, you meet a finer woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her. Wheresoever she is, she cannot long lie hid.

[*Exeunt; Frankly, L.H. Bellamy, R.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*St. James's Park.*

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND, CLARINDA, and JACINTHA,
L.H.

Jac. Ay, ay, we both stand condemned out of our own mouths.

Cla. Why, I cannot but own I never had thought of any man that troubled me but him.

Mrs. S. Then I dare swear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving Bath so soon.

Cla. Indeed you are mistaken. I have not had one scruple since.

Jac. Why, what one inducement can he have ever to think of you again?

Cla. Oh, the greatest of all inducements, curiosity: let me assure you a woman's surest hold over a man is to keep him in uncertainty. As soon as ever you put him out of doubt, you put him out of your power: but when once a woman has awakened his curiosity, she may lead him a dance of many a troublesome mile, without the least fear of losing him at last.

Jac. Now do I heartily wish he may have spirit enough to follow, and use you as you deserve. Such a

spirit, with but a little knowledge of our sex, might put that heart of yours into a strange flutter.

Cla. I care not how soon. I long to meet with such a fellow. Our modern beaux are such joint-babies in love, they have no feeling; they are entirely insensible either of pain or pleasure but from their own dear persons; and according as we flatter or affront their beauty, they admire or forsake ours: they are not worthy even of our displeasure; and, in short, abusing them is but so much ill nature merely thrown away. But the man of sense, who values himself upon his high abilities, or the man of wit, who thinks a woman beneath his conversation—to see such the subjects of our power, the slaves of our frowns and smiles, is glorious indeed!

Mrs. S. No man of sense, or wit either, if he be truly so, ever did, or ever can think a woman of merit beneath his wisdom to converse with.

Jac. Nor will such a woman value herself upon making such a lover uneasy.

Cla. Amazing! Why, every woman can give case. You cannot be in earnest.

Mrs. S. I can assure you she is, and has put in practice the doctrine she has been teaching.

Cla. Impossible! Who ever heard the name of love mentioned without an idea of torment? But pray let us hear.

Jac. Nay, there is nothing to hear, that I know of.

Cla. So I suspected indeed. The novel is not likely to be long, when the lady is so well prepared for the denouement.

Jac. The novel, as you call it, is not so short as you may imagine. I and my spark have been long acquainted: as he was continually with my father, I soon perceived he loved me; and the manner of his expressing that love was what pleased and won me most.

Cla. Well, and how was it! the old bait, flattery; dear flattery, I warrant ye.

Jac. No indeed; I had not the pleasure of hearing my person, wit and beauty, painted out with forced

praises; but I had a more sensible delight, in perceiving the drift of his whole behaviour was to make every hour of my time pass away agreeably.

Cla. The rustic ! what, did he never say a handsome thing of your person ?

Mrs. S. He did, it seems, what pleas'd her better ; he flatter'd her good sense, as much as a less cunning lover would have done her beauty.

Cla. On my conscience you are well match'd.

Jac. So well, that if my guardian denies me happiness (and this evening he is to pass his final sentence), nothing it left but to break my prison, and fly into my lover's arms for safety.

Cla. Hey-day ! o' my conscience thou art a brave girl. Thou art the very first prude that ever had honesty enough to avow her passion for a man.

Jac. And thou art the first finish'd coquette who ever had any honesty at all.

Mrs. S. Come, come ; you are both too good for either of those characters.

Cla. And my dear Mrs. Strictland here, is the first young married woman of spirit who has an ill-natured fellow for a husband, and never once thinks of using him as he deserves.—Good heaven !—If I had such a husband——

Mrs. S. You would be just as unhappy as I am !

Cla. But come now, confess ;—do not you long to be a widow ?

Mrs. S. Would I were any thing but what I am ?

Cla. Then go the nearest way about it. I'd break that stout heart of his in less than a fortnight. I'd make him know—

Mrs. S. Pray be silent. You know my resolution.

Clar. I know you have no resolution

Mrs. S. You are a mad creature, but I forgive you.

Cla. It is all meant kindly, I assure you. But since you won't be persuaded to your good, I will think of making you easy in your submission, so soon as ever I can. I dare say I may have the same lodging I had

last year: I can know immediately.—I see my chair; and so, ladies both, adieu. [*Exit, L.H.U.E.*]

Jac. Come, Mrs. Strictland, we shall but just have time to get home before Mr. Bellamy comes.

Mrs. S. Let us return then to our common prison, You must forgive my ill nature, Jacintha, if I almost wish Mr. Strictland may refuse to join your hand where your heart is given.

Jac. Lord, madam, what do you mean?

Mrs. S. Self-interest only, child. Methinks your company in the country would soften all my sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

Re-enter CLARINDA, L.H.U.E.

Cla. Dear Mrs. Strictland,—I am so confused, and and so out of breath—

Mrs. S. Why, what's the matter?

Jac. I protest you fright me.

Cla. Oh! I have no time to recover myself, I am so frighten'd and so pleas'd. In short then, the dear man is here.

Mrs. S. Here—Lord—Where?

Cla. I met him this instant: I saw him at a distance, turn'd short, and ran hither directly. Let us go home.—I tell you he follows me.

Mrs. S. Why, had you not better stay, and let him speak to you?

Cla. Ay!—But then—he won't know where I live, without my telling him.

Mrs. S. Come then. Ha, ha, ha!

Jac. Ay, poor Clarinda!—Allons donc.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter FRANKLY, L.H.

Frank. Sure that must be she! her shape and easy air cannot be so exactly copied by another. Now you young rogue, Cupid, guide me directly to her as you would the surest arrow of your quiver. [*Exit, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*A Street before Strictland's Door.*

Enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and MRS. STRICTLAND,
R.H.

Cla. Lord !—Dear Jacintha,—for heaven's sake make haste: he'll overtake us before we get in.

Jac. Overtake us ! why, he is not in sight.

Cla. Is not he? Ha ! Sure I have not dropped my fan.—I would not have him lose sight of me neither.
(*Aside.*)

Mrs. S. Here he is—

Cla. In—In—In then.

Jac. (*Laughing.*) What, without your fan ?

Cla. Pshaw ! I have lost nothing.—In, in, I'll follow you. [*Exeunt into the House, D.F.L.H. Clarinda last.*]

Enter FRANKLY, R.H.

Frank. It is impossible I should be deceiv'd. My eyes, and the quick pulses at the heart assure me it is she. Ha ! 'tis she, by heaven ! and the door left open too.—A fair invitation, by all the rules of love.
[*Exit, D.F.L.H.*]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Strictland's House.*

Enter CLARINDA, L.H. FRANKLY following her.

Frank. I hope, madam, you will excuse the boldness of this intrusion, since it is owing to your own behaviour that I am forced to it.

Cla. To my behaviour, sir.

Frank. You cannot but remember me at Bath, madam, where I so lately had the favour of your hand—

Cla. I do remember, sir ; but I little expected any

wrong interpretation of my behaviour from one who had so much the appearance of a gentleman.

Frank. What I saw of your behaviour was so just, it would admit of no misrepresentation. I only feared, whatever reason you had to conceal your name from me at Bath, you might have the same to do it now; and though my happiness was so nearly concerned, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

Cla. Sir, there seems to be so much civility in your rudeness, that I can easily forgive it; though I don't see how your happiness is at all concerned.

Frank. No, madam! I believe you are the only lady who could, with the qualifications you are mistress of, be insensible of the power they give you over the happiness of our sex.

Cla. How vain should we women be, if you gentlemen were but wise! If you did not all of you say the same things to every woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

Frank. Could you have the least sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the dictates of a heart that admires you; may I not say that—

Cla. Sir, this is carrying the—

Frank. When I danced with you at Bath, I was charmed with your whole behaviour, and felt the same tender admiration: but my hope of seeing you afterwards kept in my passion till a more proper time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable modesty to prevent my making use of this second opportunity.

Cla. This behaviour, sir, is so different from the gaiety of your conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

Frank. There is nothing, madam, which could take off from the gaiety with which your presence inspires every heart, but the fear of losing you. How can I be

otherwise than as I am, when I know not, but you may leave London as abruptly as you did Bath.

Enter LUCETTA, R.H.

Luc. Madam, the tea is ready, and my mistress waits for you.

Gla. Very well, I come.—[*Exit Lucetta, R.H.*]—You see, sir, I am called away: but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an assurance, that the business which brings me to town will keep me here some time.

Frank. How generous it is in you thus to ease the heart, that knew not how to ask for such a favour.—I fear to offend.—But this house I suppose is yours?

Gla. You will hear of me, if not find me here.

Frank. I then take my leave. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Gla. I'm undone!—He has me!

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND, R.H.

Mrs. S. Well; how do you find yourself?

Gla. I do find,—that if he goes on as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least uneasiness.

Mrs. S. A very terrible prospect, indeed!

Gla. But I must tease him a little.—Where is Jacintha? How she will laugh at me, if I become a pupil of her's, and learn to give ease! No; positively I shall never do it.

Mrs. S. Poor Jacintha has met with what I feared from Mr. Strictland's temper, an utter denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natur'd.

Gla. Well; now do I heartily wish my affairs were in his power a little, that I might have a few difficulties to surmount: I love difficulties; and yet, I don't know—it is as well as it is. [*Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter STRICTLAND, L.H.D.

Strict. These doings in my house distract me. I met a fine gentleman ; when I inquired who he was—why, he came to Clarinda. I met a footman too, and he came to Clarinda. I shall not be easy till she is decamped. My wife had the character of a virtuous woman ;—and they have not been long acquainted : but then they were by themselves at Bath.—That hurts—that hurts :—they must be watch'd, they must ; I know them, I know all their wiles, and the best of them are but hypocrites.—Ha !—

Enter LUCETTA, R.H. *who passes over the Stage,*
and Exit, I.H.

Suppose I bribe the maid : she is of their council, the manager of their secrets : it shall be so ; money will do it, and I shall know all that passes.

Re-enter LUCETTA, L.H.D.

Lucetta !

Luc. Sir.

Strict. Lucetta !

Luc. Sir.—If he should suspect, and search me now, I'm undone. (Aside.)

Strict. She is a sly girl, and may be serviceable. (Aside.)—Lucetta, you are a good girl, and have an honest face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no deceit in it.—Yet, if she should be false, she can do me most harm. (Aside.)

Luc. Pray, sir, speak out.

Strict. No ; she is a woman, and it is the highest imprudence to trust her. (Aside.)

Luc. I am not able to understand you.

Strict. I am glad of it. I would not have you understand me.

Luc. Then what did you call me for ?—If he should

be in love with my face, it would be rare sport.

(*Aside.*)

Strict. Tester, ay, Tester is the proper person.
(*Aside.*) Lucetta, tell Tester I want him.

Luc. Yes, sir.—Mighty odd, this! It gives me time, however, to send Buckle with this letter to his master.

[*Aside: Exit, L.H.D.*]

Strict. Could I but be once well satisfied that my wife had really finished me, I believe I should be as quiet as if I were sure to the contrary: but whilst I am in doubt, I am miserable.

Enter TESTER, L.H.D.

Tes. Does your Honour please to want me?

Strict. Ay, Tester.—I need not fear. The honesty of his service, and the goodness of his look, make me secure: I will trust him. (*Aside.*)—Tester, I think I have been a tolerable good master to you.

Tes. Yes, sir;—very tolerable.

Strict. I like his simplicity well. It promises honesty.—(*Aside.*) I have a secret, Tester, to impart to you: a thing of the greatest importance. Look upon me, and don't stand picking your fingers.

Tes. Yes, sir.—No, sir.

Strict. But will not his simplicity expose him the more to Lucetta's cunning? Yes, yes; she will worm the secret out of him. I had better trust her with it at once.—So—I will.—(*Aside.*) Tester, go send Lucetta hither.

Tes. Yes, sir.—Here she is.

Re-enter LUCETTA, L.H.D.

Lucetta, my master wants you.

Strict. Get you down, Tester.

Tes. Yes, sir.

[*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Luc. If you want me, sir, I beg you would make haste, for I have a thousand things to do.

Strict. Well, well; what I have to say will not

take up much time, could I but persuade you to be honest.

Luc. Why, sir, I hope you don't suspect my honesty?

Strict. Well, well; I believe you honest.

(*Crosses, and Shuts L.H.D.*)

Luc. What can be at the bottom of all this?

(*Aside.*)

Strict. So; we cannot be too private. (*Crosses to Centre.*)—Come hither, hussy; nearer yet.

Luc. Lord, sir! you are not going to be rude. I vow I will call out.

Strict. Hold your tongue.—Does the baggage laugh at me? She does; she mocks me, and will reveal it to my wife; and her insolence upon it will be more insupportable to me than cuckoldom itself.—(*Aside.*) I have not leisure now, Lucetta:—some other time.—Hush! Did not the bell ring? Yes, yes! my wife wants you. Go, go, go to her.—(*Pushes her out, R.H.*) There is no hell on earth like being a slave to suspicion.
[*Exit, L.H.D.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Piazza, Covent Garden.*

Enter JACK MEGGOT and BELLAMY, L.H.

Bel. Nay, nay; I would not put your family into any confusion.

J. Meg. None in life, my dear, I assure you. I will go and order every thing this instant for her reception.
(*Crosses to R.H.*)

Bel. You are too obliging, sir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no certainty when I shall trouble you; I only know that my Jacintha has taken such a resolution.

J. Meg. Therefore we should be prepared; for when once a lady has such a resolution in her head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. 'Foregad, Mr. Bellamy, this must be a girl of fire.

Enter FRANKLY, R.H.

Frank. Buxom and lively as the bounding doe :—
Fair as painting can express, or youthful poets fancy
when they love. Tol de rol lol!

(Singing and Dancing.)

Bel. Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

Frank. Who should it be, but—I shall know her
name to-morrow. *(Sings and Dances.)*

J. Meg. What is the matter, ho ! Is the man mad ?

Frank. Even so, gentlemen ; as mad as love and joy
can make me. *(Crosses to Centre.)*

Bel. But inform us whence this joy proceeds ?

Frank. Joy ! joy ! my lads ! she's found ! my Per-
dita ! my charmer ! *(Crosses to R.H.)*

J. Meg. 'Egad ! her charms have bewitch'd the
man, I think.—But who is she ?

Bel. Come, come, tell us who is this wonder !

Frank. But will you say nothing ?

(Crosses to Centre.)

Bel. Nothing, as I live.

Frank. Nor you ?

J. Meg. I'll be silent as the grave—

Frank. With a tombstone upon it, to tell every one
whose dust it carries.

J. Meg. I'll be as secret as a debauched prude—

Frank. Whose sanctity every one suspects. Jack,
Jack, 'tis not in thy nature ; keeping a secret is worse
to thee than keeping thy accounts. But to leave fool-
ing, listen to me both, that I may whisper it into your
ears, that echo may not catch the sinking sound :—I
cannot tell who she is, faith. Tol de rol lol—

(Crosses to R.H. singing.)

J. Meg. Mad ! mad ! very mad !

Frank. All I know of her is, that she is a charming
woman,—*(Crosses to Centre.)*—and has given me li-
berty to visit her again.—Bellamy, 'tis she, the lovely
she. *(Apart to Bellamy.)*

Bel. So I did suppose. *(Apart. Crosses to Centre.)*

J. Meg. Poor Charles ! for heaven's sake, Mr. Bellamy, persuade him to go to his chamber, whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu. (*Aside to Bellamy.*) B'ye, Charles. Ha, ha, ha ! [*Exit, R.H.*]

Frank. Oh, love ! thou art a gift worthy of a god indeed ! Dear Bellamy, nothing now could add to my pleasure, but to see my friend as deep in love as I am.

Bel. I show my heart is capable of love by the friendship it bears to you.

Frank. The light of friendship looks dim before the brighter flame of love ; love is the spring of cheerfulness and joy. Why how dull and phlegmatic do you show to me now ; whilst I am all life ; light as feather'd Mercury.—You, dull and cold as earth and water ; I, light and warm as air and fire.—These are the only elements in love's world ! Why, Bellamy, for shame ! get thee a mistress and be sociable.

Bel. Frankly, I am now going to—

Frank. Why that face now ? Your humble servant, sir. My flood of joy shall not be stopp'd by your melancholy fits, I assure you. (*Going, L.H.*)

Bel. Stay, Frankly, I beg you stay. What would you say now if I were really in love ?

Frank. Why faith, thou hast such romantic notions of sense and honour, that I know not what to say.

Bel. To confess the truth then, I am in love.

Frank. And do you confess it as if it were a sin ?—Proclaim it aloud ; glory in it ; boast of it as your greatest virtue. Swear, it with a lover's oath, and I will believe you.

Bel. Why then, by the bright eyes of her I love—

Frank. Well said !

Bel. By all that's tender, amiable, and soft in woman—

Frank. Bravo !

Bel. I swear I am as true an enamorado as ever tagg'd rhyme.

Frank. And art thou then thoroughly in love ? Come to my arms, thou dear companion of my joys.

(*They embrace.*)

Enter RANGER, L.H.U.M.

Ran. Why—Hey!—Is there never a wench to be got for love or money?

Bel. Pshaw! Ranger here?

Ran. (*In Centre.*) Yes, Ranger is here, and perhaps does not come so impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out secrets. Nay, never look so queer—Here is a letter, Mr. Bellamy, that seems to promise you better diversion than your hugging one another.

Bel. What do you mean?

Ran. Do you deal much in these paper tokens?

Bel. Oh the dear kind creature! it is from herself.

(*Opens it and Reads.—Apart to Frankly.*)

Ran. What, is it a pair of laced shoes she wants? or have the boys broke her windows?

Bel. Hold your profane tongue!

Frank. Nay, pr'ythee, Bellamy, don't keep it to yourself, as if her whole affections were contain'd in those few lines.

Ran. Pr'ythee let him alone to his silent raptures. But it is as I always said—your grave men ever are the greatest whoremasters.

Bel. I cannot be disoblig'd now, say what you will: but how came this into your hands?

Ran. Your servant Buckle and I changed commissions; he went on my errand, and I came on his.

Bel. 'Sdeath! I want him this very instant.

Ran. He will be here presently; but I demand to know what I have brought you.

Frank. Ay, ay! out with it! you know we never blab, and may be of service.

Bel. Twelve o'clock! oh, the dear hour!

Ran. Why it is a pretty convenient time indeed.

Bel. By all that's happy, she promises in this letter here, to leave her guardian this very night—and run away with me.

Ran. How is this?

Bel. Nay, I know not how myself;—she says at the bottom—(*Crosses to Centre.*)—*Your servant has full instructions from Lucetta how to equip me for my expedition. I will not trust myself home with you to-night, because I know it is inconvenient; therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; it is no matter how far off my guardian's.—Yours,*

JACINTHA.

Ran. Carry her to your own lodgings, that will be the most convenient.

Frank. Why this must be a girl of spirit, faith!

Bel. And beauty equal to her sprightliness. I love her, and she loves me. She has thirty thousand pounds to her fortune.

Ran. The devil she has!

Bel. And never plays at cards.

Ran. Nor does any one thing like any other woman, I suppose.

Frank. Not so, I hope, neither.

Bel. Oh, Frankly, Ranger, I never felt such ease before! the secret's out, and you don't laugh at me.

Frank. Laugh at thee for loving a woman with thirty thousand pounds? thou art a most unaccountable fellow.

Ran. How the devil could he work her up to this! I never could have had the face to have done it. But—I know not how—there is a degree of assurance in you modest gentlemen, which we impudent fellows never can come up to.

Bel. Oh! your servant, good sir. You should not abuse me now, Ranger, but do all you can to assist me.

Ran. Why, look ye, Bellamy, I am a damnable unlucky fellow, and so will have nothing to do in this affair: I'll take care to be out of the way, so as to do you no harm; that's all I can answer for; and so—success attend you.—(*Going. Crosses to L.H.*)—I cannot leave you quite to yourself neither; for if this should prove a round-house affair, as I make no doubt it will, I believe I may have more interest there than

you; and so, sir, you may hear of me at——

(*Whispers.*)

Bel. For shame, Ranger! the most noted gaming-house in town.

Ran. Forgive me this once, my boy. I must go, faith, to pay a debt of honour to some of the greatest rascals in town.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Frank. (R.H.) But where do you design to lodge her?

Bel. At Mr. Meggot's.—He is already gone to prepare for her reception.

Frank. The properest place in the world: his aunts will entertain her with honour.

Bel. And the newness of her acquaintance will prevent its being suspected.—Frankly, give me your hand: this is a very critical time.

Frank. Pho! none of your musty reflections now! When a man is in love, to the very brink of matrimony, what the devil has he to do with Plutarch and Seneca? Here is your servant, with a face full of business.—(*Crosses to L.H.*)—I'll leave you together.—I shall be at the King's Arms, where, if you want my assistance, you may find me.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Enter BUCKLE, R.H.

Bel. So,—Buckle, you seem to have your hands full?

Buck. Not fuller than my head, sir, I promise you. You have had your letter, I hope?

Bel. Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my instructions.

Buck. Why, the affair stands thus.—As Mr. Strickland sees the door lock'd and barred every night himself, and takes the key up with him, it is impossible for us to escape any way but through the window; for which purpose I have a ladder of ropes.

Bel. Good—

Buck. And as a lady's dress is not the most decent dress to come down a ladder in, I have in this other

bundle a suit of boy's clothes, which I believe will fit her; at least it will serve the time she wants it.—You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

Bel. Why, you are in spirits, you rogue.

Buck. These I am now to convey to Lucetta.—Have you any thing to say, sir?

Bel. Nothing, but that I will not fail at the hour appointed. Bring me word to Mr. Meggot's how you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your fortune.

[*Exeunt; Buck.* R.H. *Bel.* L.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Street before Mr. Strictland's House.*

Enter BELLAMY, in a Chairman's Coat, R.H.

Bel. How tediously have the minutes pass'd these last few hours! and the envious rogues will fly, no lightning quicker, when we would have them stay.—Hold! let me not mistake:—this is the house.—(*Pulls out his Watch.*)—By heaven it is not yet the hour!—I hear somebody coming. The moon's so bright—I had better not be here till the happy instant comes.

[*Exit, L.H.U.E.*]

Enter FRANKLY, R.H.

Frank. Wine is no antidote to love, but rather feeds the flame; now am I such an amorous puppy, that I cannot walk straight home, but must come out of my way to take a view of my queen's palace by moonlight.—Ay, here stands the temple where my goddess is adored;—the door's open. (*Retires, R.H.*)

Enter LUCETTA, D.F.L.H.

Luc. (Under the Window.) Madam, madam, hist !
Madam.—How shall I make her hear ?

JACINTHA, in Boy's Clothes, appears at the Window.

Jac. Who is there ? What's the matter ?

Luc. It is I, madam ; you must not pretend to stir
till I give the word ; you'll be discovered if you do.—

Frank. What do I see ? A man ! My heart misgives
me. *(Aside.)*

Luc. My master is below, sitting up for Mrs. Cla-
rinda. He raves as if he was mad about her being out
so late.

Frank. Here is some intrigue or other. I must
see more of this before I give further way to love.

(Aside.)

Luc. One minute he is in the street : the next he is
in the kitchen : now he will lock her out, and then he'll
wait himself, and see what figure she makes when she
vouchsafes to venture home.

Jac. I long to have it over. Get me but once out of
this house.

Frank. Cowardly rascal ! would I were in his place !
(Aside.)

Luc. If I can but fix him any where, I can let you
out myself.—You have the ladder ready, in case of ne-
cessity ?

Jac. Yes, yes. *[Exit Lucetta, D.F.L.H.]*

Frank. The ladder ! This must lead to some disco-
very ; I shall watch you my young gentleman, I shall.
(Aside.)

Enter CLARINDA, and Servant, R.H.

Cla. This whist is a most enticing devil. I am afraid
I am too late for Mr. Strictland's sober hours.

Jac. Ha ! I hear a noise !

Cla. No; I see a light in Jacintha's window. You may go home.—(*Gives the Servant Money.*)—I am safe.

[*Exit Servant, R.H.*]

Jac. Sure it must be he! Mr. Bellamy—Sir.

Frank. Does not he call me? (*Aside.*)

Cla. Ha! Who's that? I am frightened out of my wits.—A man!

Jac. Is it you?

Frank. Yes, yes; 'tis I, 'tis I.

Jac. Listen at the door.

Frank. I will; 'tis open.—(*Listens.*)—There is no noise: all's quiet.

Cla. Sure it is my spark;—and talking to Jacintha. (*Aside.*)

Frank. You may come down the ladder—quick.

Jac. Catch it then, and hold it.

Frank. I have it. Now I shall see what sort of mettle my young spark is made of. (*Aside.*)

Cla. With a ladder too! I'll assure you. But I must see the end of it. (*Aside.*)

Jac. Hark! did not somebody speak?

Frank. No, no; be not fearful.—'Sdeath! we are discover'd. (*Frankly and Clarinda retire.*)

Enter LUCETTA, D.F.L.H.

Luc. Hist! hist! are you ready?

Jac. Yes. May I venture?

Luc. Now is your time. He is in high conference with his privy counsellor, Mr. Tester. You may come down the back stairs, and I'll let you out.

[*Exit, D.F.L.H.*]

Jac. I will, I will; and am heartily glad of it.

[*Exit, from the Window, into the House.*]

Frank. (*Advancing.*) May be so; but you and I shall have a few words before you get off so cleanly.

Cla. (*Advancing.*) How lucky it was I came home at this instant. I shall spoil his sport I believe.—(*Aside.*)—Do you know me, sir?

Frank. I am amazed ! You here ! This was unexpected indeed !

Cla. Why, I believe I do come a little unexpectedly, but I shall amaze you more. I know the whole course of your amour : all the process of your mighty passion from its first rise—

Frank. What is all this ?

Cla. To the very conclusion, which you vainly hope to effect this night.

Frank. By heaven, madam, I know not what you mean ! I came hither purely to contemplate on your beauties.

Cla. Any beauties, sir, I find will serve your turn. Did I not hear you talk to her at the window ?

Frank. Her !

Cla. Blush, blush, for shame ; but be assur'd you—
(*Crosses to L.H.*)—have seen the last both of Jacintha and me.

[*Exit, D.F.L.H.*]

Frank. Jacintha ! Hear me, madam.—She is gone. This must certainly be Bellamy's mistress, and I have fairly ruin'd all his scheme. This it is to be in luck.

Enter BELLAMY, behind, L.H.

Bel. Ha ! a man under the window ! (*Aside.*)

Frank. No ; here she comes, and I may convey her to him.

Enter JACINTHA, from D.F.L.H. and runs to FRANKLY.

Jac. I have at last got to you. Let's haste away.—
Oh !

Frank. Be not frighten'd, lady.

Jac. Oh ! I am abus'd, betray'd !

Bel. Betray'd !—Frankly ! (*Puts her over to L.H.*)

Frank. Bellamy !

Bel. I can scarce believe it, though I see 't. Draw—

Frank. Hear me, Bellamy.—Lady—

Jac. Stay ;—do not fight !

Frank. I am innocent ; it is all a mistake !

Jac. For my sake be quiet! We shall be discovered! the family is alarm'd!

Bel. You are obey'd. Mr. Frankly, there is but one way—
(*Puts her over to R.H.*)

Frank. I understand you. Any time but now. You will certainly be discovered! To-morrow, at your chambers.

Bel. Till then farewell.

[*Exeunt Bellamy and Jacintha, R.H.*]

Frank. Then, when he is cool, I may be heard; and the real, though suspicious account of this matter may be believed. Yet, amidst all this perplexity, it pleases me to find my fair incognita is jealous of my love.

Strict. (Within.) Where's Lucetta? Search every place.

Frank. Hark! the cry is up! I must be gone.

[*Exit, L.H.*]

Enter STRICTLAND, TESTER, and Servants, D.F.L.H.

Strict. She's gone! she's lost! I am cheated! pursue her! seek her!

Tes. Sir, all her clothes are in her chamber.

Serv. Sir, Mrs. Clarinda said she was in boy's clothes.

Strict. Ay, ay, I know it:—Bellamy has her.—Come along.—Pursue her.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter RANGER, L.H.U.E.

Ran. Hark!—Was not the noise this way?—No, there is no game stirring. This same goddess, Diana, shines so bright with her chastity, that, 'egad, I believe the wenches are ashamed to look her in the face. Now I am in an admirable mood for a frolic—have wine in my head, and money in my pocket, and so am furnished out, for the cannonading of any countess in Christendom. Ha! What have we here?—a ladder!—this cannot be placed here for nothing;—and a window open! Is it love or mischief now that is going on within? I care not which;—I am in a right cue for

either. Up I go, neck or nothing.—Stay,—do I not run a greater chance of spoiling sport than I do of making any? That I hate as much as I love the other! There can be no harm in seeing how the land lies;—I'll up. (*Goes up softly.*)—All is hush.—Ha! a light, and a woman! by all that's lucky, neither old nor crooked! I'll in.—Ha! she is gone again! I will after her. (*Gets in at the Window.*) And for fear of the squalls of virtue, and the pursuit of the family, I will make sure of the ladder. (*Pulls it up.*) Now fortune be my guide. [*Exit, from the Window.*]

SCENE II.—*Mrs. Strictland's Dressing-room.*

Enter MRS. STRICTLAND, *followed by* LUCETTA, R.H.

Mrs. S. Well, I am in great hopes she will escape.

Luc. Never fear, madam; the lovers have the start of him, and I warrant they'll keep it.

Mrs. S. Were Mr. Strictland ever to suspect my being privy to her flight, I know not what might be the consequence.

Luc. Then you had better be undressing. He may return immediately. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Enter RANGER, M.D. *as she is sitting down at the Toilet,* R.H..

Ran. Young and beautiful. (*Aside.*)

Luc. I have watch'd him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected till this morning—

Mrs. S. (*Seated,* L.H.) And who gave you authority to watch his actions, or pry into his secrets?

Luc. I hope, madam, you are not angry. I thought it might have been of service to you to know my master was jealous.

Ran. And her husband jealous! If she does but send away the maid, I am happy. (*Aside.*)

Mrs. S. Leave me. (*Angrily.*)

Luc. This it is to meddle with other people's affairs.

[*Exit in Anger, L.H.*]

Ran. What a lucky dog I am ! I never made a gentleman a cuckold before. Now impudence assist me.
(*Aside.*)

Mrs. S. (Rises.) Provoking ! I am sure I never have deserved it of him.

Ran. Oh, cuckold him by all means, madam ; I am your man ! (*She shrieks.*)—Oh, fie, madam ! if you squall so cursedly, you will be discover'd.

Mrs. S. Discover'd ! What mean you, sir ? Do you come to abuse me ?

Ran. I'll do my endeavour, madam ; you can have no more.

Mrs. S. Whence came you ? How got you here ?

Ran. Dear madam, so long as I am here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came ? But that I may satisfy your curiosity, first, as to your " Whence came you ? " I answer, out of the street ; and to your " How got you here ? " I say, in at the window ; it stood so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, madam—you were going to undress, I beg I may not incommode you.

Mrs. S. This is the most consummate piece of impudence !—

Ran. For heaven's sake have one drop of pity for a poor young fellow, who long has loved you.

Mrs. S. What would the fellow have ?

Ran. Your husband's usage will excuse you to the world.

Mrs. S. I cannot bear this insolence ! Help ! help !

Ran. Oh, hold that clamorous tongue, madam !—Speak one word more, and I am gone, positively gone.

Mrs. S. Gone ! so I would have you.

Ran. Lord, madam, you are so hasty !

Mrs. S. Shall I not speak when a thief, a robber, breaks into my house at midnight ? Help ! help !

Ran. Ha ! no one hears. Now, Cupid, assist me !
(*Aside.*)—Lookye, madam, I never could make fine

speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lie ; I have said more to you already, than I ever said to a woman in such circumstances in all my life. But since I find you will yield to no persuasion to your good, I will gently force you to be grateful. (*Throws down his Hat, and seizes her.*)—Come, come, unbend that brow, and look more kindly on me !

Mrs. S. For shame, sir ! thus on my knees let me beg for mercy. (*Kneels.*)

Ran. And thus on mine, let me beg the same. (*Kneels, catches, and Kisses her.*)

Strict. (Within.) Take away her sword ! she'll hurt herself !

Mrs. S. Oh, heavens ! that is my husband's voice !

Ran. (Rises.) The devil it is !

Strict. (Within.) Take away her sword, I say, and then I can close with her.

Mrs. S. He is upon the stairs, now coming up ! I am undone if he sees you.

Ran. Plague on him, I must decamp then. Which way ? (*Crosses to R.H.*)

Mrs. S. Through this passage, into the next chamber.

Ran. And so into the street. With all my heart. You may be perfectly easy, madam : mum's the word ; I never blab.—I shall not leave off so, but will wait till the last moment. [*Aside, and exit, R.H.*]

Mrs. S. So, he's gone. What could I have said, if he had been discovered !

Enter MR. STRICTLAND, driving in JACINTHA, L.H. LUCETTA following.

Strict. Once more, my pretty masculine madam, you are welcome home ; and I hope to keep you somewhat closer than I have done ; for eight o'clock to-morrow morning is the latest hour you shall stay in this lewd town.

Jac. Oh, sir, when once a girl is equipp'd with a hearty resolution, it is not your worship's sagacity, nor

the great chain at your gate, can hinder her from doing what she has a mind.

Strict. Oh, lord, lord! how this love improves a young lady's modesty!

Jac. Am I to blame to seek for happiness any where, when you are resolved to make me miserable here?

Strict. I have this night prevented your making yourself so, and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you safe now, and the devil shall not get you out of my clutches again. I have lock'd the doors and barred them, I warrant you. So here, (*Gives her a Candle.*)—troop to your chamber, and to bed; whilst you are well. Go! (*Crosses to Centre, and treads on Ranger's Hat.*)—What's here? a hat! a man's hat in my wife's dressing-room! (*Looks at the Hat.*)

Mrs. S. What shall I do? (*Aside.*)

Strict. (*Takes up the Hat, and looks at Mrs. Strickland.*)—Ha! by hell, I see 'tis true!

Mrs. S. My fears confound me. I dare not tell the truth, and know not how to frame a lie! (*Aside.*)

Strict. Mrs. Strickland, Mrs. Strickland, how came this hat into your chamber?

Luc. Are you that way disposed, my fine lady, and will not trust me? (*Aside.*)

Strict. Speak, wretch, speak!

Jac. I could not have suspected this. (*Aside.*)

Strict. Why dost thou not speak?

Mrs. S. Sir—

Strict. Guilt;—'tis guilt that ties your tongue!

Luc. I must bring her off, however. (*Aside.*)

Strict. My fears are just, and I am miserable;—thou worst of women!

Mrs. S. I know my innocence, and can bear this no longer.

Strict. I know you are false, and 'tis I who will bear my injuries no longer.

(*Both walk about in a Passion.*)

Luc. (*Apart to Jacintha.*) Is not this hat yours? Own it, madam.

[*Takes away Jacintha's Hat, and exit, L.H.D.*]

Mrs. S. What ground, what cause have you for jealousy, when you yourself can witness your leaving me was accidental, your return uncertain, and expected even sooner than it happened? The abuse is gross and palpable. *(Sinks into a Chair.)*

Strict. Why this is true!

Mrs. S. Indeed, Jacintha, I am innocent.

Strict. And yet this hat must belong to somebody.

Jac. Dear Mrs. Strictland, be not concerned; when he has diverted himself a little longer with it—

Strict. Ha!—

Jac. I suppose he will give me my hat again.

Strict. Your hat?

Jac. Yes, my hat. You brush'd it from my side yourself, and then trod upon it; whether on purpose to abuse this lady, or no, you best know yourself.

Strict. It cannot be:—'tis all a lie.

Jac. Believe so still, with all my heart; but the hat is mine. Now, sir, who does it belong to?

(Snatches it, and puts it on.)

Strict. Why did she look so?

Jac. Your violence of temper is too much for her. You use her ill, and then suspect her for that confusion which you yourself occasion.

Strict. Why did not you set me right at first?

Jac. Your hard usage of me, sir, is a sufficient reason why I should not be much concerned to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your lady's sake I do it now; who deserves much better of you than to be thus exposed for every slight suspicion. See where she sits.—go to her.

Mrs. S. (Rises) Indeed, Mr. Strictland, I have a soul as much above—

Strict. Whew!—Now you have both found your tongues, and I must bear with their eternal rattle.

Jac. For shame, go to her, and—

Strict. Well, well, what shall I say? I forgive:—all is over. I—I—I forgive.

Mrs. S. Forgive! What do you mean?

Jac. Forgive her! is that all? Consider, sir—

Strict. Hold, hold, your confounded tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask pardon,—or forgive,—or any thing. Good now, be quiet.—I ask your pardon ; —there.—(*Kisses her.*) For you, madam, I am infinitely obliged to you, and could find in my heart to make you a return in kind, by marrying you to a beggar ; but I have more conscience.—Come, come to your chamber. Here, take this candle.

Re-enter LUCETTA, L.H.D. pertly.

Luc. Sir, if you please, I will light my young lady to bed.

Strict. No, no ! no such thing ; good madam. She shall have nothing but her pillow to consult this night, I assure you. So in, in. (*The Ladies take leave.*) [*Exit Jacintha, R.H.*] Good night, kind madam.

Luc. Plague of the jealous fool ! we might both have escap'd out of the window purely. (*Aside.*)

Strict. Go, get you down ; and, do you hear, order the coach to be ready in the morning at eight exactly. [*Exit Lucetta, L.H.D.*] So, she is safe till to-morrow, and then for the country ; and when she is there, I can manage as I think fit.

Mrs. S. Dear Mr. Strictland—

Strict. I am not in a humour, Mrs. Strictland, fit to talk with you. Go to bed. I will endeavour to get the better of my temper ; if I can, I'll follow you.—[*Exit Mrs. Strictland, R.H.*] How despicable have I made myself ! [*Exit, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Chamber.*

Enter RANGER, D.F.L.H.

Ran. All seems hush'd again, and I may venture out. I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole skin. And shall so much love and claret as I am in possession of only lull me to sleep, when it might so much

better keep me waking? Forbid it, fortune, and forbid it, love. This is a chamber, perhaps of some bewitching female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a light! the door opens. A boy? plague on him.
(Retires, D.F.L.H.)

Enter JACINTHA, R.H. with a Candle.

Jac. I have been listening at the door, and from their silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to bed together.

Ran. A pretty boy, faith; he seems uneasy. (*Aside.*)

Jac. (*Sitting down, R.H.*) What an unlucky night has this proved to me! every circumstance has fallen out unhappily.

Ran. He talks aloud. I'll listen. (*Aside.*)

Jac. But what most amazes me is, that Clarinda should betray me!

Ran. Clarinda! she must be a woman. Well, what of her? (*Aside.*)

Jac. My guardian else would never have suspected my disguise.

Ran. Disguise! Ha, it must be so! What eyes she has! what a dull rogue was I not to suspect this sooner!
(*Aside.*)

Jac. Ha, I had forgot; the ladder is at the window still, and I will boldly venture by myself. (*Rising briskly she sees Ranger.*) Ha! a man, and well dressed! Ha, Mrs. Strictland, are you then at last dishonest!

Ran. By all my wishes she is a charming woman! lucky rascal!
(*Aside.*)

Jac. But I will, if possible, conceal her shame, and stand the brunt of his impertinence.

Ran. What shall I say to her? No matter; any thing soft will do the business. (*Aside.*)

Jac. Who are you?

Ran. A man, young gentleman.

Jac. And what would you have?

Ran. A woman.

Jac. You are very free, sir. Here are none for you.

Ran. Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the most charming creature nature ever set her hand to; and you are the dear little pilot that must direct me to her heart.

Jac. What mean you, sir? It is an office I am not accustomed to.

Ran. You won't have far to go, however. I never make my errands tedious. It is to your own heart, dear madam, I would have you whisper in my behalf. Nay, never start. Think you such beauty could ever be concealed from eyes so well acquainted with its charms?

Jac. What will become of me? If I cry out, Mrs. Strickland is undone. This is my last resort. (*Aside.*)

Ran. Pardon, dear lady, the boldness, of this visit, which your guardian's care has forced me to; but I long have loved you, long doated on that beauteous face, and followed you from place to place, though perhaps unknown and unregarded.

Jac. Here's a special fellow. (*Aside.*)

Ran. Turn then an eye of pity on my sufferings; and by heaven, one tender look from those piercing eyes, one touch of this soft hand—

(*Going to take her Hand.*)

Jac. Hold, sir, no nearer.

Ran. Would more than repay whole years of pain.

Jac. Hear me; but keep your distance, or I raise the family.

Ran. Blessings on her tongue, only for prattling to me. (*Aside.*)

Jac. Oh, for a moment's courage, and I shall shame him from his purpose. (*Aside.*)—If I were certain so much gallantry had been shown on my account only—

Ran. You wrong your beauty to think that any other could have power to draw me hither. By all the little loves that play about your lips, I swear—

Jac. You came to me, and me alone.

Ran. By all the thousand graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

Jac. Well said—Could I but believe you—

(Goes to the Toilet and brings down his Hat.)

Ran. By heaven she comes! Ah, honest Ranger, I never knew thee fail. *(Aside.)*

Jac. Pray, sir, where did you leave this hat!

Ran. That hat! that hat—'tis my hat—I dropped it, in the next chamber as I was looking for yours.

Jac. How mean and despicable do you look now!

Ran. So, so! I am in a pretty pickle! *(Aside.)*

Jac. You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has passed within; and how ill it agrees with what you have professed to me. Let me advise you sir, to be gone immediately: through that window you may easily get into the street. One scream of mine, the least noise at that door, will wake the house.

Ran. Say you so? *(Aside.)*

Jac. Believe me, sir, an injured husband is not so easily appeas'd; and a suspected wife, that is jealous of her honour—*(Crosses to R.H.)*

Ran. Is the devil, and so let's have no more of her. Look ye, inadam, *(Getting between the Door and her.)* I have but one argument left, and that is a strong one. Look on me well, I am as handsome, a strong, well-made fellow as any about town; and since we are alone, as I take it, we have no occasion to be more private. *(Going to lay hold of her.)*

Jac. I have a reputation, sir, and will maintain it.

Ran. You have a bewitching pair of eyes.

Jac. Consider my virtue. *(Struggling.)*

Ran. Consider your beauty and my desires.

Jac. If I were a man, you dare not use me thus.

Ran. I should not have the same temptation.

Jac. Hear me, sir, I will be heard. *(Breaks from him.)* There is a man who will make you repent this usage of me. Oh. Bellamy! where art thou now?

(Crosses to R.H.)

Ran. Bellamy!

Jac. Were he here, you durst not thus affront me.

(Bursts into Tears.)

Ran. His mistress, on my soul! (*Aside.*)—You can love, madam; you can love, I find.—Her tears affect me strangely. (*Aside.*)

Jac. I am not ashamed to own my passion for a man of virtue and honour. I love and glory in it.

Ran. Oh, brave! and you can write letters, you can. “I will not trust myself home with you this evening, because I know it is inconvenient.”

Jac. Ha!

Ran. “Therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; ’tis no matter how far off my guardian’s. Yours, Jacintha.”

Jac. The very words of my letter! I am amaz’d! (*Aside.*) Do you know Mr. Bellamy?

Ran. There is not a man on earth I have so great a value for: and he must have some value for me too, or he would never have shown me your pretty epistle; think of that, fair lady. The ladder is at the window; and so, madam, I hope delivering you safe into his arms, will in some measure expiate the crime I have been guilty of to you.

Jac. Good heaven! How fortunate it this!

Ran. I believe I make myself appear more wicked than I really am. For damn me, if I do not feel more satisfaction in the thoughts of restoring you to my friend, than I could have pleasure in any favour your bounty could have bestowed. Let any other rake lay his hand upon his heart and say the same.

Jac. Your generosity transports me.

Ran. Let us lose no time then; the ladder’s ready. Where was you to lodge?

Jac. At Mr. Meggot’s.

Ran. At my friend Jacky’s! better and better still.

Jac. Are you acquainted with him too?

Ran. Ay, ay; why, did I not tell you at first that I was one of your old acquaintance? I know all about you, you see; though the devil fetch me if ever I saw you before. Now, madam, give me your hand.

Jac. And now, sir, have with you.

Han. Then thou art a girl of spirit. And though I long to hug you for trusting yourself with me, I will not beg a single kiss, till Bellamy himself shall give me leave. He must fight well that takes you from me.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Piazza.*

Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY, L.H.

Bel. Pshaw ! what impertinent devil put it into your head to meddle with my affairs ?

Frank. You know I went thither in pursuit of another.

Bel. I know nothing you had to do there at all.

Frank. I thought, Mr. Bellamy you were a lover.

Bel. I am so ; and therefore should be forgiven this sudden warmth.

Frank. And therefore should forgive the fond impertinence of a lover.

Bel. Jealousy, you know, is as natural an incident to love—

Frank. As curiosity. By one piece of silly curiosity I have gone nigh to ruin both myself and you ; let not then your jealousy complete our misfortunes. I fear I have lost a mistress as well as you ; then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

Bel. It is impossible. She is gone, removed for ever from my sight : she is in the country by this time.

Frank. How did you lose her after we parted ?

Bel. By too great confidence. When I got her to my chair, the chairmen were not to be found. And, safe as I thought in our disguise, I actually put her into

the chair, when Mr. Strictland and his servants were in sight; which I had no sooner done, than they surrounded us, overpowered me, and carried her away.

Frank. Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second attempt?

Bel. I had designed it; but when I came to the door, I found the ladder removed; and hearing no noise, seeing no lights, nor being able to make any body answer, I concluded all attempts as impracticable as I now find them.—Ha! I see Lucetta coming. Then they may be still in town.

Enter LUCETTA, R.H.

Lucetta, welcome! what news of Jacintha?

Luc. News, sir! you fright me out of my senses! Why, is she not with you?

Bel. What do you mean? With me! I have not seen her since I lost her last night.

Luc. Good heaven! then she is undone for ever.

Frank. Why, what's the matter?

Bel. Speak out—I'm all amazement.

Luc. She has escap'd, without any of us knowing how. Nobody miss'd her till morning. We all thought she went away with you. But heaven knows now what may have happened.

Bel. Somebody must have accompanied her in her flight.

Luc. We know of nobody: we are all in confusion at home. My master swears revenge on you. My mistress says a stranger has her.

Bel. A stranger!

Luc. But Mrs. Clarinda—

Bel. Clarinda! who is she?

Luc. The lady, sir, who you saw at our house last night. (To Frankly.)

Frank. Ha! what of her?

Luc. She says, she is sure one Frankly is the man; she saw them together, and knows it to be true.

Frank. Damn'd fortune ! (*Aside.*)

Luc. Sure this is not Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Nothing will convince him now. (*Aside.*)

Bel. (*Looking at Frankly.*) Ha ! 'tis true !—I see it is true. (*Aside.*) Lucetta, run up to Buckle, and take him with you to search wherever you can. (*Puts her out, R.H.*) Now, Mr. Frankly, I have found you.—You have used me so ill, that you force me to forget you are my friend.

Frank. What do you mean ?

Bel. Draw. (*Draws.*)

Frank. Are you mad ? By heavens, I am innocent.

Bel. I have heard you, and will no longer be imposed on—Defend yourself.

Frank. Nay, if you are so hot, I draw to defend myself, as I would against a madman. (*Draws.*)

Enter RANGER, L.H.U.E.

Ran. What the devil, swords at noon-day ! Have among you, faith ! (*Parts them.*) What's here, Bellamy ? (*In Centre.*)—Yes, 'gad you are Bellamy, and you are Frankly ; put up, put up both of you—or else—I am a devilish fellow when once my sword is out.

Bel. We shall have a time—

Ran. (*Pushing Bellamy one way.*) A time for what ?

Frank. I shall always be as ready to defend my innocence as now.

Ran. (*Pushing Frankly the other way.*) Innocence ! ay, to be sure—at your age—a mighty innocent fellow, no doubt. But what in the name of common sense, is it that ails you both ? Are you mad ? The last time I saw you, you were hugging and kissing ; and now you are cutting one another's throats—I never knew any good come of one fellow's beslaving another.—But I shall put you into a better humour, I warrant you.—Bellamy, Frankly, listen both of you.—Such fortune,—such a scheme—

Bel. Pr'ythee, leave fooling. What, art drunk?

Frank. He is always so, I think.

Ran. And who gave you the privilege of thinking? Drunk! no; I am not drunk.—Topsy, perhaps, with my good fortune;—merry, and in spirits;—though I have not fire enough to run my friend through the body. Not drunk, though Jack Meggot and I have boxed it about.—Champaign was the word for two whole hours by Shrewsbury clock.

Bel. Jack Meggot!—Why, I left him at one, going to bed.

Ran. That may be, but I made shift to rouse him and his family by four this morning. Ounds, I pick'd up a wench, and carried her to his house.

Bel. Ha!

Ran. Such a variety of adventures.—Nay, you shall hear.—But before I begin, Bellamy, you shall promise me half-a-dozen kisses beforehand: for the devil fetch me if that little jade, Jacintha, would give me one, though I pressed hard.

Bel. Who, Jacintha? Press to kiss Jacintha?

Ran. Kiss her! ay; why not? Is she not a woman, and made to be kissed?

Bel. Kiss her: I shall run distracted!

Ran. How could I help it, when I had her alone, you rogue, in her bed-chamber at midnight! if I had been to be sacrificed, I should have done it.

Bel. Bed-chamber, at midnight! I can hold no longer.—Draw.

Frank. Be easy, Bellamy. *(Interposing.)*

Bel. He has been at some of his damn'd tricks with her.

Frank. Hear him out.

Ran. 'Sdeath, how should I know she was his mistress? But I tell this story most miserably. I should have told yqu first, I was in another lady's chamber. By the Lord, I got in at the window by a ladder of ropes. *(Crosses to Centre.)*

Frank. Ha! another lady?

Ran. Another: and stole in upon her whilst she

was undressing ; beautiful as an angel, blooming and young.—

Frank. What, in the same house ?

Bel. What is this to Jacintha ? Ease me of my pain.

Ran. Ay, ay, in the same house, on the same floor. The sweetest little angel !—But I design to have another touch with her.

Frank. 'Sdeath ! but you shall have a touch with me first. *(They Fight.)*

Bel. Stay, Frankly. *(Interposing.)*

Ran. Why, what strange madness has possess'd you both, that nobody must kiss a pretty wench but yourselves ?

Bel. What became of Jacintha ?

Ran. Ounds ! what have you done, that you must monopolize kissing ? *(Crosses to Centre.)*

Frank. Pr'ythee, honest Ranger, ease me of the pain I am in. Was her name Clarinda ?

Bel. Speak in plain words, where Jacintha is, where to be found. Dear boy, tell me.

Ran. Ay, now it is, honest Ranger ; and, dear boy, tell me,—and a minute ago, my throat was to be cut ;—I could find in my heart not to open my lips. But here comes Jack Meggot, who will let you into all the secret, though he designed to keep it from you, in half the time that I can, though I had ever so great a mind to tell it you.

Enter JACK MEGGOT, L.H.

J. Meg. So, save ye, save ye, lads ! we have been frighten'd out of our wits for you. Not hearing of Mr. Bellamy, poor Jacintha is ready to sink for fear of any accident.

Bel. Is she at your house ?

J. Meg. Why, did not you know that ? We dispatch'd master Ranger to you three hours ago.

Ran. Ay, plague ! but I had business of my own, so I could not come.—Harkye, Frankly, is your girl, maid, wife, or widow ?

Frank. A maid, I hope.

Ran. The odds are against you, Charles.—But mine is married, you rogue, and her husband jealous.—The devil is in it if I do not reap some reward for my last night's service.

Bel. He has certainly been at Mrs. Strictland herself. But, Frankly, I dare not look on you.

Frank. This one embrace cancels all thoughts of enmity. *(Embracing him.)*

Bel. Thou generous man! *(Crosses to L.H.)* But I must haste to ease Jacintha of her fears. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Frank. And I to make up matters with Clarinda.

[Exit, R.H.]

Ran. And I to some kind wench or other, Jack. But where I shall find her, heaven knows. *(Crosses to L.H.)*
And so, my service to your monkey.

J. Meg. Adieu, rattlepate.

[Exeunt ; Ranger, L.H. Meggot, R.H.]

SCENE II. *The Hall of Mr. Strictland's House.*

Enter CLARINDA and MRS. STRICTLAND, R.H.

Mrs. S. But why in such a hurry, my dear? Stay till your servants can go along with you.

Cla. Oh, no matter ; they'll follow with my things. It is but a little way off, and my chair will guard me. After my staying out so late last night, I am sure Mr. Strictland will think every minute an age whilst I am in his house.

Mrs. S. I am as much amaz'd at his suspecting your innocence as my own ; and every time I think of it, I blush at my present behaviour to you.

Cla. No ceremony, dear child.

Mrs. S. No, Clarinda, I am too well acquainted with your good humour. But I fear, in the eye of a malicious world, it may look like a confirmation of his suspicion.

Cla. My dear, if the world will speak ill of me, for the little innocent gaiety which I think the peculiar happiness of my temper, I know no way to prevent it, and am only sorry the world is so ill-natured : but I

shall not part with my mirth, I assure them, so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my dear, this may be the greatest uneasiness your husband's jealousy ever gives you.

Mrs. S. I hope he never again may have such occasion as he had last night.

Cla. You are so unfashionable a wife.—Why, last night's accident would have made half the wives in London easy for life. Has not his jealousy discover'd itself openly. And are you not innocent? There is nothing but your foolish temper that prevents his being absolutely in your power.

Mrs. S. Clarinda, this is too serious an affair to laugh at. Let me advise you, take care of Mr. Frankly, observe his temper well, and if he has the least taint of jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your power.

Cla. You will hear little more of Frankly, I believe. Here is Mr. Strictland.

Enter STRICTLAND and LUCETTA, L.H.

Strict. Lucetta says you want me, madam.

Cla. I trouble you, sir, only that I might return you thanks for the civilities I have receiv'd in your family, before I took my leave.

Strict. Keep them to yourself, dear madam. As it is at my request that you leave my house, your thanks upon that occasion are not very desirable.

Cla. Oh, sir, you need not fear. My thanks were only for your civilities. They will not overburden you. But I'll conform to your humour, sir, and part with as little ceremony—

Strict. As we met.

Cla. The brute! (*Aside.*) My dear, good bye, we may meet again. (*To Mrs. Strictland.*)

Strict. If you dare trust me with your hand.

Cla. Lucetta, remember my instructions. Now, sir, have with you. (*Strictland leads Clarinda out, L.H.*)

Mrs. S. Are her instructions cruel or kind, Lucetta? For I suppose they relate to Mr. Frankly.

Luc. Have you a mind to try if I can keep a secret as well as yourself, madam? But I will show you I am fit to be trusted by keeping this, though it signifies nothing.

Mrs. S. This answer is not so civil, I think.

Luc. I beg pardon, madam, I meant it not to offend.

Mrs. S. Pray let me have no more such. I neither desire nor want your assistance.

Re-enter STRICTLAND, L.H.

Strict. She is gone; I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have begun the day with gallantry, madam, shall I conduct you up?

Mrs. S. There is something, sir, which gives you secret uneasiness. I wish—

Strict. Perhaps so, madam; and perhaps it may soon be no secret at all. *(Leads her out, R.H.)*

Luc. Would I were once well settled with my young lady; for at present this is but an odd sort of a qucer family. Last night's affair puzzles me. A hat there was that belong'd to none of us, that's certain; madam was in a fright, that is as certain; and I brought all off. Jacintha escaped, no one of us knows how. The good man's jealousy was yesterday groundless; yet, to-day, in my mind, he is very much in the right. Mighty odd, all this! *(Knocking without, L.H.)* Somebody knocks. If this should be Clarinda's spark, I have an odd message for him too.

(She opens the Door.)

Enter FRANKLY, L.H.

Frank. So, my pretty handmaid, meeting with you gives me some hopes. May I speak with Clarinda?

Luc. Whom do you want, sir?

Frank. Clarinda, child. The young lady I was admitted to yesterday.

Luc. Clarinda !—No such person lives here, I assure you.

Frank. Where then ?

Luc. I don't know indeed, sir.

Frank. Will you inquire within ?

Luc. Nobody knows in this house, sir, you will find.

Frank. What do you mean ? She is a friend of Jacintha's, your lady. I will take my oath she was here last night ; and you yourself spoke of her being here this morning.—Not know !

Luc. No ; none of us know. She went away of a sudden ;—no one of us can imagine whither.

Frank. Why, faith, child, thou hast a tolerable face, and hast delivered this denial very handsomely ; but let me tell you, your impertinence this morning had lik'd to have cost me my life ; now therefore make me amends. I come from your young mistress ; I come from Mr. Bellamy ; I come with my purse full of gold,—that persuasive rhetoric, to win you to let me see and speak to this Clarinda once again.

Luc. She is not here, sir.

Frank. Direct me to her.

Luc. No, I can't do that neither.

Re-enter STRICTLAND, R.H.

Strict. I heard a knocking at the door, and a man's voice.—Ha ! (Aside.)

Frank. Deliver this letter to her.

Strict. By all my fears, a letter ! (Aside.)

Luc. I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

Frank. Take it then ;—and with it this.

(Kisses her and gives her Money.)

Strict. Um ! there are two bribes in a breath ! What a jade she is ! (Aside.)

Luc. Ay, this gentleman understands reason.

(Aside.)

Frank. And be assured you oblige your mistress while you are serving me.

Strict. Her mistress!—Damn'd sex! and damn'd wife, thou art an epitome of that sex! (*Aside.*)

Frank. And if you can procure me an answer your fee shall be enlarged. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Luc. The next step is to get her to read this letter.

Strict. (*Snatches the Letter.*) No noise!—but stand silent there whilst I read this.

(*Breaks it open and drops the Case.—Reads.*)

Madam.—*The gaiety of a heart happy as mine was yesterday, may, I hope, easily excuse the unseasonable visit I made your house last night.*—Death and the devil! confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much!—There was a man then to whom the hat belong'd; and I was gull'd, abus'd, cheated, impos'd on by a chit, a child.—Oh, woman, woman!—But I will be calm, search it to the bottom, and have a full revenge.—

Luc. So, here's fine work! He'll make himself very ridiculous though. (*Aside.*)

Strict. (*Reads.*) *I know my innocence will appear so manifestly, that I need only appeal to the lady who accompanied you at Bath.*—Your very humble servant, good, innocent, fine madam Clarinda.—*And I do not doubt but her good nature will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble servant,*

CHARLES FRANKLY.

Now, who can say my jealousy lack'd foundation, or my suspicion of fine madam's innocent gaiety was unjust?—Gaiety! why ay, 'twas gaiety brought him hither.—My wife may be false in gaiety. What a number of things become fashionable under the notion of gaiety.—What, you received this epistle in gaiety too: and were to deliver it to my wife, I suppose, when the gay fit came next upon her?—Why, you impudent young strumpet, do you laugh at me?

Luc. I would, if I dar'd, laugh heartily.—Be pleas'd,

sir, only to look at that piece of paper that lies there.

Strict. Ha!

Luc. I have not touched it, sir. It is the case that letter came in, and the direction will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

Strict. This is directed to Clarinda!

Luc. Oh, is it so? Now read it over again, and all your foolish doubts will vanish.

Strict. I have no doubts at all. I am satisfied that you, Jacintha, Clarinda, my wife, all are—

Luc. Lud! lud! you will make a body mad.

Strict. Hold your impertinent tongue.

Luc. You'll find the thing to be just as I say, sir.

Strict. Be gone. [*Exit Lucetta, L.H.D.*] They must be poor at the work, indeed, if they did not lend one another their names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident, and I am miserable. But for my wife, she shall not stay one night longer in my house. Separation, shame, contempt, shall be her portion. I am determined in the thing; and when once it is over, I may perhaps be easy. [*Exit, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*The Street.*

CLARINDA brought in a Chair, &c. followed by
RANGER.

Ran. Harkye, chairman! damn your confounded trot. Go slower.

Cla. Here, stop.

Ran. By heavens! the monsters hear reason and obey.

Cla. (*Letting down the Window.*) What troublesome fellow was that?

Chair. Some rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himself home, and wants us to do it for him.

Cla. There.—And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. (*Goes in, R.H.D.S.E.*)

Ran. That's as much as to say now, pray follow

me. Madam, you are a charming woman, and I will do it.—

1 *Chair*. Stand off, sir.

Ran. Pr'ythee, honest fellow—what—what writing is that? (*Endeavouring to get in.*)

2 *Chair*. You come not here.

Ran. Lodgings to be let: a pretty convenient inscription, and the sign of a good modest family. There may be lodgings for gentlemen as well as ladies. Harkye, rogues, I'll lay you all the silver I have in my pocket, there it is, I get in there in spite of your teeth, ye pimps. (*Throws down the Money and goes in, R.H.D.S.E.*)

Cla. (*Within.*) Chair, chair, chair!

1 *Chair*. Who calls chair?—What have you let the gentleman in?

2 *Chair*. I'll tell you what, partner, he certainly slipp'd by whilst we were picking up the money. Come, take up. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*Clarinda's Lodgings.*

Enter CLARINDA, L.H. followed by Maid.

Maid. Bless me, madam, you seem disorder'd; what's the matter?

Cla. Some impertinent fellow follow'd the chair, and I am afraid they let him in. (*A noise between Ran. and Land. without, L.H.*) I should certainly know that voice. My madcap cousin Ranger, as I live. I am sure he does not know me.—If I could but hide my face now, what sport I should have! A mask! a mask! Run and see if you can find a mask.

Maid. I believe there is one above.

Cla. Run, run, and fetch it. [*Exit Maid, R.H.*] Here he comes.

Enter RANGER and LANDLADY, L.H.D.

How unlucky this is!

(*Turning from them.*)

Land. What's your business here, unmannerly sir?

Ran. Well, let's see these lodgings that are to be let. 'Gad, a very pretty neat tenement.—But harkye, is it real and natural, all that, or only patch'd up and new painted this summer season, against the town fills?

Land. What does the saucy fellow mean with his double tenders here? Get you down—

Re-enter MAID, R.H. with a Mask.

Maid. Here is a very dirty one. (*Aside to Clarinda.*)

Cl. No matter. [*Exit Maid, R.H.*] Now we shall see a little what he would be at. (*Aside.*)

Land. This is an honest house. For all your insinuations, I'll have you thrown down neck and heels.

Ran. Pho! not in such a hurry, good old lady.—A mask! nay, with all my heart. It saves a world of blushing. Have you ne'er a one for me? I am apt to be asham'd myself on these occasions. (*To Land.*)

Land. Get you down, I say.

Ran. Not if I guess right, old lady. Madam: (*To Clarinda, who makes signs to the Landlady to retire.*) look ye there now! that a woman should live to your age, and know so little of the matter. Be gone. [*Exit, Landlady, L.H.*] By her forwardness this should be a whore of quality. (*Places Chairs,—they sit.*) My boy, Ranger, thou art in luck to-day. She wont speak, I find;—then I will. (*Aside.*) Delicate lodgings truly, madam; and very neatly furnished.—A very convenient room this, I must needs own, to entertain a mix'd company. But, my dear charming creature, does not that door open to a more commodious apartment for the happiness of a private friend or so? The prettiest brass lock. (*Goes to R.H.D.*) Fast, um; that won't do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful woman, I am sure you are. Pr'ythee let me see your face? It is

your interest, child;—the longer you delay, the more I shall expect. Therefore, (*Gets round to L.H. and resumes his Seat.—Takes her Hand.*) my dear, soft, kind, new acquaintance, thus let me take your hand, and whilst you gently, with the other, let day-light in upon me, let me softly hold you to me, that with my longing lips I may receive the warmest, best impression. (*She unmask.*)—Clarinda!

Cla. Ha, ha! your servant, cousin Ranger.—Ha, ha, ha!

Ran. Oh, your humble servant, madam. You had like to have been beholden to your mask, cousin.—I must brazen it out. (*Aside.*)

Cla. Ha, ha, ha! You were not so happy in your disguise, sir. The pretty stagger in your gait, that happy disposition of your wig, the genteel negligence of your whole person, and those pretty flowers of modish gallantry, made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet coz. Ha, ha!

Ran. Oh, I knew you too; but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my person, and had a mind to sink the relation under that little piece of black velvet; and, 'gad, you never find me behind-hand in a frolic. (*They rise.*) But since it is otherwise, my merry, good-humoured cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in town, as I should be to meet any of my old bottle acquaintance.

Cla. And on my side I am as happy in meeting your worship, as I should be in a rencounter with e'er a petticoat in christendom.

Ran. And if you have any occasion for a dangling gallant to Vauxhall, the Opera, or even the poor neglected Park, you are so unlike the rest of your virtuous sisters of the petticoat, that I will venture myself with you.

Cla. Take care what you promise; for who knows but this face, you were pleased to say so many pretty things of before you saw it, may raise so many rivals among your kept mistresses and reps of quality.—

Ran. Hold, hold! a truce with your satire, sweet

coz ; or if scandal must be the topic of every virtuous woman's conversation, call for your tea-water, and let it be in its proper element. Come, your tea, tea.

Cla. With all my heart. *(Rings the Bell.)*

Re-enter MAID, R.H.

Get tea ;—[*Exit Maid, R.H.*] upon condition that you stay till it comes.

Ran. That is according as you behave, madam.

Cla. Oh, sir, I am very sensible of the favour.

Ran. Nay, you may, I assure you ; for there is but one woman of virtue besides yourself, I would stay with ten minutes (and I have not known her above these twelve hours ;) the insipidity, or the rancour of their discourse, is insufferable.—'Sdeath ! I had rather take the air with my grandmother.

Cla. Ha, ha, ha ! the ladies are highly obliged to you, I vow.

Ran. I tell you what ; the lady I speak of was obliged to me, and the generous girl is ready to own it.

Cla. And pray when was it you did virtue this considerable service.

Ran. But this last night, the devil fetch me ! A romantic whim of mine conveyed me into her chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone, at midnight, dress'd like a soft adonis.

Cla. In boy's clothes ! this is worth attending to. *(Aside.)*

Ran. 'Gad, I no more suspected her being a woman, than I did your being my cater-cousin.

Cla. How did you discover it at last ?

Ran. Why, faith, she very modestly dropp'd me a hint of it herself.

Cla. Herself ! If this should be Jacintha ! *(Aside.)*

Ran. Ay, 'fore 'gad, did she ; which I imagined a good sign at midnight, ay, cousin ! So I e'en invented a long story of a passion I had for her, though I had

never seen her before :—you know my old way ;—and so many, such tender things—

Cla. As you said to me just now.

Ran. Pho ! quite in another style, I assure you. It was midnight, and I was in a right cue.

Cla. Well, and what did she answer to all these protestations ?

Ran. Why, instead of running into my arms at once, as I expected—

Cla. To be sure.

Ran. 'Gad, like a free-hearted, honest girl, she frankly told me she liked another better than she liked me ; that I had something in my face that showed I was a gentleman, and she would e'en trust herself with me, if I would give her my word I would convey her to her spark.

Cla. Oh, brave ! and how did you bear this ?

Ran. Why, curse me, if I am ever angry with a woman for not having a passion for me.

Cla. No ?

Ran. Never. I only hate your sex's vain pretence of having no passion at all. 'Gad, I lov'd the good-natured girl for it, took her at her word, stole her out of the window, and this morning made a very honest fellow happy in the possession of her.

Cla. And her name is Jacintha ?

Ran. Ha !

Cla. Your amours are no secret, sir. You see you might as well have told me all the whole of last night's adventure ; for you find I know.

Ran. All ! Why what do you know ?

Cla. Nay, nothing. I only know that a gentleman's hat cannot be dropp'd in a lady's chamber—

Ran. The devil !

Cla. But a husband is such an odd, impertinent, awkward creature, that he will be stumbling over it.

Ran. Here hath been fine work. (*Aside.*) But how, in the name of wonder, should you know all this ?

Ula. By being in the same house.

Ran. In the same house?

Cl. Ay, in the same house, a witness of the confusion you have made.

Ran. Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate! It must be so! *(Aside.)*

Cl. And let me tell you, sir, that even the dull, low-spirited diversions you ridicule in us tame creatures, are preferable to the romantic exploits that only wine can raise you to.

Ran. Yes, cousin.—But I'll be even with you.

(Aside.)

Cl. If you reflect, cousin, you will find a great deal of wit in shocking a lady's modesty, disturbing her quiet, tainting her reputation, and ruining the peace of a whole family.

Ran. To be sure.

Cl. These are the high-mettled pleasures of you men of spirit, that the insipidity of the virtuous can never arrive at. And can you in reality think your Burgundy and your Bacchus, your Venus and your loves, an excuse for all this? Fie, cousin, fie.

Ran. No, cousin.

Cl. What, dumb? I am glad you have modesty enough left not to go about to excuse yourself.

Ran. It is as you say; when we are sober, and reflect but ever so little on the follies we commit, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet the very next minute we run again into the same absurdities.

Cl. What! moralizing, cousin? Ha, ha, ha!

Ran. What you know is not half, not a hundredth part of the mischief of my last night's frolic; and yet the very next petticoat I saw this morning, I must follow it, and be d——'d to me;—*(Sits down.)*—though, for ought I know, poor Frankly's life may depend upon it.

Cl. Whose life, sir?

Ran. And here do I stand prating to you now.

Cl. Pray, good cousin; explain yourself.

Ran. Good cousin! She has it. *(Aside.)*—Why,

whilst I was making off with the wench, Bellamy and he were quarrelling about her; and though Jacintha and I made all the haste we could, we did not get to them before—

Cla. Before what? I'm frighten'd out of my wits!

Ran. Not that Frankly cared three-halfpence for the girl.

Cla. But there was no mischief done, I hope?

Ran. Pho! a slight scratch; nothing at all, as the surgeon said: though he was but a queer-looking son-of-a-b—— of a surgeon neither.

Cla. Good God! why, he should have the best that can be found in London.

Ran. Ay, indeed, so he should; that was what I was going for when I saw you. They are all at Jack Meggot's, hard by, and you will keep me here.

Cla. I keep you here! For heaven's sake, be gone.

Ran. Your tea is a d——'d while a coming.

Cla. You shall have no tea, now; I assure you.

Ran. Nay, one dish!

Cla. No, positively you shall not stay.

Ran. Your commands are absolute, madam.

(*Rises.—Going, L.H.*)

Cla. Then Frankly is true; and I, only, am to blame.

(*Aside.*)

Ran. (*Returns.*) But I beg ten thousand pardons, cousin, that I should forget—

Cla. Forget what?

Ran. Forget to salute you.

Cla. Pshaw! how can you trifle at such a time as this?

Ran. A trifle! wrong not your beauty.

Cla. Lord, how teasing you are! There.

Ran. (*Kisses her.*) Poor thing, how uneasy she is! (*Aside.*)—Nay, no ceremony; you shall not stir a step with me. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Cla. I do not intend it. This is downright provok-

[*Exit, R.H.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I—*A Room in Mr. Strictland's House.*

MR. and MRS. STRICTLAND *discovered, sitting at a Table ; she weeping, and he writing.*—*Mrs. S.*
R.H. Strict. L.H.

Mrs. S. Heigh ho !

Strict. What can possibly be the occasion of that sigh, madam? You have yourself agreed to a maintenance, and a maintenance no duchess need be ashamed of.

Mrs. S. But the extremities of provocation that drove me to that agreement—

Strict. Were the effect of your own follies. Why do you disturb me? (*Writes.*)

Mrs. S. I would not willingly give you a moment's uneasiness; I but desire a fair and equal hearing; and if I satisfy you not in every point, then abandon me; discard me to the world and its malicious tongues.

Strict. What was it you said? Damn this pen.

Mrs. S. I say, Mr. Strictland, I would only—

Strict. You would only—you would only repeat what you have been saying this hour, I am innocent; and when I showed you the letter I had taken from your maid, what was then your poor evasion, but that it was to Clarinda, and you were innocent.

Mrs. S. Heaven knows I am innocent.

Strict. But I know your Clarinda, your woman of honour, is your blind, your cover, your—But why do I distract myself about a woman I have no longer any concerns with? Here, madam, is your fate;—a letter to your brother in the country.

Mrs. S. Sir—

Strict. I have told him what a sister he is to receive, and how to bid her welcome.

Mrs. S. Then my ruin is complete. My brother!

Strict. I must vindicate my own honour, else what will the world say?

Mrs. S. That brother was my only hope, my only ground of patience. In his retirement I hoped my name might have been safe, and slept, till by some happy means you might at length have known me innocent, and pitied me.

Strict. Retirement! pretty soul! no, no, that face was never made for retirement; it is another sort of retiring you are fittest for. Ha! hark! What's that? (*A Knocking at L.H.D.*) Two gentle taps;—and why but two? Was that the signal, madam?—(*Rises.*)—Stir not, on your life!

Mrs. S. Give me resolution, heaven, to bear this usage, and keep it secret from the world. (*Aside.*)

Strict. I will have no signs, no items, no hem to tell him I am here. (*A Knock, at L.H.D.*)—Ha! another tap. The gentleman is in haste, I find.

(*Crosses, and opens L.H.D.*)

Enter TESTER, L.H.D.

Tester! Why did you not come in, rascal? (*Beats him.*) All vexations meet to cross me.

Tes. Lard, sir! what do you strike me for? My mistress ordered me never to come in where she was, without first knocking at the door.

Strict. Oh, cunning devil! Tester is too honest to be trusted.

Mrs. S. Unhappy man! will nothing undeceive him? (*Aside.*)

Tes. Sir, here is a letter.

Strict. To my wife?

Tes. No, sir, to you. The servant waits below.

Strict. Art sure it is a servant?

Tes. Sir! it is Mr. Buckle, sir. (*Stares.*)

Strict. I am mad; I know not what to say, or do, or think. But let's read. (*Reads to himself.*)

Sir,—We cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strict-land may possibly be ruined in your esteem, and in

the voice of the world, only by the confusion which our affairs have made in your family, without offering all within our power to clear the misunderstanding between you. If you will give yourself the trouble but to step to Mr. Meggot's, where all parties will be, we doubt not but we can entirely satisfy your most flagrant suspicions, to the honour of Mrs. Strictland, and the quiet of your lives.

JACINTHA.

JOHN BELLAMY.

Hey! here is the whole gang witnessing for one another. They think I am an ass, and will be led by the nose to believe every thing. (*Aside.*) Call me a chair. [*Exit Tester, L.H.D.*] Yes, I will go to this rendezvous of enemies,—I will;—and find out all her plots, her artifices, and contrivances: it will clear my conduct to her brother, and all her friends.

[*Aside; and exit, L.H.D.*

Mrs. S. (Rises.) Gone so abruptly! What can that letter be about? No matter; there is no way left to make us easy but by my disgrace; and I must learn to suffer; time and innocence will teach me to bear it patiently.

Enter LUCETTA, L.H.D.

Luc. Mrs. Bellamy, madam, (for my young lady is married); begs you would follow Mr. Strictland to Mr. Meggot's. She makes no doubt but she shall be able to make you and my master easy.

Mrs. S. But how came she to know any thing of the matter?

Luc. I have been with them, madam; I could not bear to see so good a lady so ill-treated.

Mrs. S. I am indeed, Lucetta, ill-treated; but I hope this day will be the last of it. (*Crosses to L.H.*)

Luc. Madam Clarinda and Mr. Frankly will be there; and the young gentleman, madam, who was with you in this room last night.

Mrs. S. Ha! if he is there, there may be hopes; and it is worth the trying.

Luc. Dear lady, let me call a chair.

Mrs. S. I'll go with you. I cannot be more wretched than I am. [*Exeunt, L.H.*

SCENE II.—*A Room in Jack Meggot's House.*

Enter FRANKLY, RANGER, BELLAMY, JACINTHA, and JACK MEGGOT, R.H.

Frank. Oh, Ranger, this is news indeed! your cousin, and a lady of such fortune!

Ran. I have done the business for you; I tell you she's your own. She loves you.

Frank. You make my heart dance with joy. Words are too faint to tell the joy I feel.

Ran. I have put that heart of hers into such a flutter, that I'll lay a hundred guineas, with the assistance which this lady has promised me, I fix her yours directly.

Jac. Ay, ay, Mr. Frankly, we have a design upon her which cannot fail. But you must obey orders.

Frank. Most willingly; but remember, dear lady, I have more than life at stake.

Jac. Away then into the next room; for she is this instant coming hither.

Frank. Hither! you surprise me more and more.

Jac. Here is a message from her, by which she desires leave to wait on me this afternoon.

Ran. Only for the chance of seeing you here, I assure ye.

Frank. Let me hug thee, though I know not how to believe it.

Ran. Pshaw! pr'ythee don't stifle me! It is a busy day, a very busy day.

J. Meg. Thou art the most unaccountable creature in life.

Ran. But the most lucky one, Jack, if I succeed for Frankly as I have for Bellamy; and my heart whispers me I shall. Come in, most noble Mr. Buckle: and what have you to propose?

Enter BUCKLE, L.H.

Buck. A lady, madam, in a chair, says her name is Clarinda.

Jac. Desire her to walk up.

Bel. How could you let her wait? [*Exit Buckle, L.H.*] You must excuse him, madam; Buckle is a true bachelor's servant, and knows no manners.

Jac. Away, away, Mr. Frankly, and stay till I call you. A rap with my fan shall be the signal. [*Exit Frankly, R.H.*] We make very free with your house, Mr. Meggot.

J. Meg. Oh, you could not oblige me more.

Enter CLARINDA, L.H.

Cla. Dear Mrs. Bellamy, pity my confusion. I am to wish you joy and ask your pardon all in a breath. I know not what to say; I am quite ashamed of my last night's behaviour.

Jac. Come, come, Clarinda, it is all well; all is over and forgot. Mr. Bellamy— (*Salute.*)

Cla. I wish you joy, sir, with all my heart; and should have been very sorry if any folly of mine had prevented it.

Bel. Madam, I am oblig'd to you.

Cla. I see nothing of Mr. Frankly! my mind mis-gives me. (*Aside.*)

Ran. And so, you came hither purely out of friendship, good-nature, and humility.

Cla. Purely.

Ran. To confess your offences, to beg pardon, and to make reparation.

Cla. Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

J. Meg. The most so of any thing in life, I think.

Ran. A very whimsical business for so fine a lady, and an errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear cousin.

Jac. Never, I dare swear; if I may judge by the awkward concern she shows in delivering it.

Cla. Concern ! Lard, well I protest you are all exceeding pretty company ! Being settled for life, Jacintha, gives an ease to the mind that brightens conversation strangely.

Jac. I am sorry, with all my heart, you are not in the same condition ; for as you are, my dear, you are horridly chagriné.

Ran. But with a little of our help, madam, the lady may recover, and be very good company.

Cla. Hum ! what does he mean, Mr. Bellamy ?

Bel. Ask him, madam.

Cla. Indeed I shall not give myself the trouble.

Jac. Then you know what he means ?

Cla. Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

Jac. It is something you won't let him explain, I find.

Re-enter BUCKLE, L.H. and whispers JACK MEGGOT.

J. Meg. Very well. Desire him to walk into the parlour. Madam, the gentleman is below.

Jac. Then every one to your posts. You know your cues.

Ran. I warrant ye. [*Exeunt the Gentlemen, L.H.U.E.*]

Cla. All gone ! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

Jac. And I, my dear Clarinda, have something which I do not know how to tell you : but it must be known sooner or later.

Cla. What's the matter ?

Jac. Poor Mr. Frankly—

Cla. You fright me out of my senses !

Jac. Has no wounds but what you can cure. Ha, ha, ha !

Cla. Pshaw ! I am angry.

Jac. Pshaw ! You are pleased ; and will be more so, when I tell you this man, whom fortune has thrown in your way, is in rank and temper the man in the world who suits you best for a husband.

Cla. Husband! I say, husband, indeed! Where will this end? (*Aside.*)

Jac. His very soul is yours, and he only waits an opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next room. Shall I call him in?

Cla. My dear girl, hold!

Jac. How foolish is this coyness now, Clarinda! If the men were here indeed, something might be said—And so, Mr. Frankly—

Cla. How can you be so teasing?

Jac. Nay, I am in downright earnest; and to show how particular I have been in my inquiries, though I know you have a spirit above regarding the modish, paltry way of a Smithfield bargain—His fortune—

Cla. I don't care what his fortune is.

Jac. Don't you so; then you are further gone than I thought you were.

Cla. No, pshaw! pr'ythee, I don't mean so neither.

Jac. I don't care what you mean; but you won't like him the worse, I hope, for having a fortune superior to your own. Now shall I call him in?

Cla. Pho, dear girl:—Some other time.

Jac. (*Raps with her Fan.*) That's the signal, and here he is. You shall not stir:—(*Crosses to L.H.*)—I positively will leave you together. [*Exit, L.H.U.E.*]

Cla. I tremble all over.

Enter FRANKLY, R.H.

Frank. Pardon this freedom, madam; but I hope our having so luckily met with a common friend in Mrs. Bellamy—

Cla. Sir!

Frank. Makes any further apology for my behaviour last night absolutely unnecessary.

Cla. So far, Mr. Frankly, that I think the apology should be rather on my side, for the impertinent bustle I made about her.

Frank. This behaviour gives me hopes, madam: pardon the construction;—but from the little bustle

you made about the lady, may I not hope you was not quite indifferent about the gentleman?

Cla. Have a care of being too sanguine in your hopes: might not a love of power, or the satisfaction of showing that power, or the dear pleasure of abusing that power; might not these have been foundation enough for more than what I did?

Frank. Charming woman! With most of your sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever power your beauty gives, your good nature will allow you no other use of it than to oblige.

Cla. This is the height of compliment, Mr. Frankly.

Frank. Not in my opinion, I assure you, madam; and I am now going to put it to the trial.

Cla. What is he going to say now? (*Aside.*)

Frank. What is it that ails me, that I cannot speak? Pshaw! he here!

Enter RANGER, L.H.U.E.

Interrupted! impertinent! (*Aside.*)

Ran. (*In Centre.*) There is no sight so ridiculous as a pair of your true lovers. Here are you two now, bowing and cringing, and keeping a passion secret from one another, that is no secret to all the house beside; and if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the town within these two hours.

Cla. What do you mean?

Frank. Ranger—

Ran. Do you be quiet, can't ye? (*Apart to Frankly.*) But it is over, I suppose, cousin, and you have given him your consent?

Cla. Sir, the liberties you are pleas'd to take with me—

Ran. Oh! in your airs still, are you? Why then, Mr. Frankly, there is a certain letter of yours, sir, to this lady—

Cla. A letter to me?

Ran. Ay! to you, madam.

Frank. Ha! what of that letter?

Ran. It is only fallen into Mr. Strictland's hands, that is all; and he has read it.

Frank. Read it!

Ran. Ay, read it to all his family at home, and to all the company below; and if some stop be not put to it, it will be read in all the coffee-houses in town.

Frank. A stop! this sword shall put a stop to it, or I will perish in the attempt.

Ran. But will that sword put a stop to the talk of the town?—Only make it talk the faster, take my word for it.

Cla. This is all a trick.

Ran. A trick! is it so! (*Crosses to L.H.*) you shall soon see that, my fine cousin. [*Exit, L.H.U.E.*]

Frank. It is but too true, I fear. There is such a letter, which I gave Lucetta. Can you forgive me? Was I much to blame, when I could neither see nor hear of you?

Cla. (*Tenderly.*) You give yourself, Mr. Frankly, a thousand more uneasinesses than you need about me.

Frank. If this uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you.—Interrupted again!

Cla. This is downright malice. (*Asiae.*)

Enter RANGER, L.H.U.E. followed by JACINTHA, STRICTLAND, BELLAMY, and JACK MEGGOT.

Ran. Enter, enter, gentlemen and lady. Now you shall see whether this is a trick or no.

Cla. Mr. Strictland here! What is all this?

Jac. Do not be uneasy, my dear; we will explain it to you.

Frank. I cannot bear this trifling, Ranger, when my heart is on the rack.

Ran. Come this way then, and learn. (*Jacinta, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger retire. Strictland, Bellamy, and Meggot advance.*)

Strict. Why, I know not well what to say. This has a face. This letter may as well agree with Cla-

rinda as with my wife, as you have told the story ; and Lucetta explain'd it so ; but she, for a sixpenny-picce, would have constru'd it the other way.

J. Meg. But, sir, if we produce this Mr. Frankly to you, and he owns himself the author of this letter.—

Bel. And if Clarinda likewise be brought before your face to encourage his addresses, there can be no further room for doubt.

Strict. No. Let that appear, and I shall, I think I shall, be satisfied.—But yet it cannot be—

Bel. Why not ? Hear me, sir. (*They talk Apart, L.H.U.E. Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger advance, R.H.*)

Jac. In short, Clarinda, unless the affair is made up directly, a separation, with all the obloquy on her side, must be the consequence.

Cla. Poor Mrs. Strictland ! I pity her : but for him, he deserves all he feels, were it ten times what it is.

Jac. It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear his impertinence.

Cla. With all my heart. You will do what you please with me.

Frank. (*Advancing, R.H.*) Generous creature !

Strict. Ha, here she is, and with her the very man I saw deliver the letter to Lucetta. I do begin to fear I have made myself a fool. Now for the proof.—(*Aside.*) Here is a letter, sir, (*Crosses to Frankly.*) which has given me great disturbance, and these gentlemen assure me it was wrote by you.

Frank. That letter, sir, upon my honour, I left this morning with Lucetta, for this lady.

(*Pointing to Clarinda.*)

Strict. For that lady ? And Frankly, the name at the bottom, is not feign'd, but your real name ?

Frank. Frankly is my name.

Strict. I see, I feel myself ridiculous. (*Aside.*)

Jac. Now, Mr. Strictland, I hope—

J. Meg. Ay, ay ; a clear case.

Strict. I am satisfied, and will go this instant to Mrs. Strictland.

Ran. Why then the devil fetch me, if this would satisfy me.

Strict. What's that ?

Ran. Nay, nothing ; it is no affair of mine.

Bel. What do you mean, Ranger ?

Strict. Ay, what do you mean ? I will know before I stir.

Ran. With all my heart, sir. Cannot you see that all this may be a concerted matter between them.

Frank. Ranger, you know I can resent.

Strict. Go on ; I will defend you, let who will resent it. (*Ranger Crosses to him.*)

Ran. Why then, sir, I declare myself your friend : and were I as you, nothing but their immediate marriage should convince me.

Strict. Sir, you're right, and are my friend indeed. Give me your hand.

Ran. Nay, were I to hear her say—I, Clarinda, take thee, Charles, I would not believe them till I saw them a-bed together. Now resent it as you will. (*To Frank.*)

Strict. Ay, sir, as you will ; but nothing less shall convince me ; and so, my fine lady, if you are in earnest——

Cla. Sure, Mr. Strictland——

Strict. Nay, no flouncing ; you cannot escape.

Ran. Why, Frankly, has't no soul ?

Frank. I pity her confusion.

Ran. Pity her confusion !—the man's a fool :—Here, take her hand. (*He joins their Hands.*)

Frank. Thus, on my knees, then let me ravish, with your hand, your heart.

Cla. Ravish it you cannot ; for it is with all my heart I give it you.

Strict. I am satisfied.

Cla. And so am I, now it is once over.

Ran. And so am I, my dainty cousin ; and I wish you joy of a man your whole sex would go to cuffs for, if they knew him but half so well as I do.—Ha ! she here ; this is more than I bargain'd for. (*Aside.*)

(*All but Strictland, go up the Stage.*)

Enter JACINTHA, L.H. leading in MRS. STRICTLAND.

Strict. (Embracing Mrs. Strictland.) Madam, reproach me not with my folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

Mrs. S. Reproach you! no! if ever you hear the least reflection pass my lips, forsake me in that instant: or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

Strict. It is enough. I am ashamed to talk to thee. This letter, which I wrote to your brother, thus I tear in pieces, and with it part for ever with my jealousy.

Mrs. S. This is a joy, indeed! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting to make it lasting.

Ran. (R.H.) What the devil is coming now? *(Aside.)*

Mrs. S. Be assur'd every other suspicion of me was as unjust as your last: though perhaps you had more foundation for your fears.

Ran. She won't tell, sure, for her own sake. *(Aside.)*

Mrs. S. All must be clear'd before my heart will be at ease.

Ran. It looks plaguy like it, though! *(Aside.)*

Strict. What mean you? I am all attention.

Mrs. S. There was a man, as you suspected in my chamber last night.

Strict. Ha! take care, I shall relapse.

Mrs. S. That gentleman was he—

Ran. Here is a devil for you! *(Aside.)*

Mrs. S. Let him explain the rest.

Ran. A frolic, a mere frolic, on my life.

Strict. A frolic! Zounds! *(They interpose.)*

Ran. Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declar'd yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask, I shall be ready to give.

Strict. Be quick then, and ease me of my pain:

Ran. Why then, as I was strolling about last night,

upon the look out, I must confess, chance, and chance only, convey'd me to your house; where I espied a ladder of ropes most invitingly fastened to the window.

Jac. Which ladder I had fasten'd for my escape.

Strict. Proceed.

Ran. Up mounted I, and up I should have gone, if it had been in the garret; it's all one to Ranger. I open'd one door, and then another, and to my great surprise the whole house was silent; at last, I stole into a room where this lady was undressing.

Strict. 'Sdeath and the devil! you did not dare, sure——

Ran. I don't know whether I had dared, or no, if I had not heard the maid say something of her master's being jealous. Oh, damn me, thought I, then the work is half done to my hands.

Jac. Do you mind that, Mr. Strictland?

Strict. I do—I do, most feelingly.

Ran. The maid grew saucy, and most conveniently to my wishes was turn'd out of the room; and if you had not the best wife in the world——

Strict. Ounds, sir, but what right have you——

Ran. What right, sir?—if you will be jealous of your wife without a cause; if you will be out at that time of night, when you might have been so much better employ'd at home; we young fellows think we have a right——

Jac. Oh yes! we young fellows have a right.

Strict. No joking, I beseech you; you know not what I feel.

Ran. Then seriously, I was mad, or drunk enough, call it which you will, to be very rude to this lady, for which I ask both her pardon and yours. I am an odd sort of a fellow, perhaps; but I am above telling you or any man a lie, damn me, if I am not.

Strict. I must, I cannot but believe you; and for the future, madam, you shall find a heart ready to love and trust you. No tears, I beg; I cannot bear them.

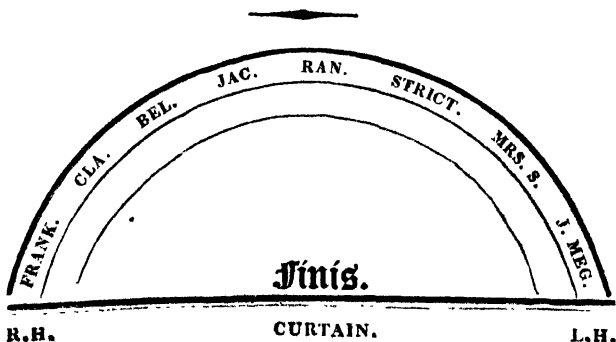
Mrs. S. I cannot speak, and yet there is a favour, sir—

Strict. I understand you ; and, as a proof of the sincerity with which I speak, I beg it as a favour, of this lady in particular, (*To Clarinda.*) and of all the company in general, to return to my house immediately, where every thing, Mr. Bellamy, shall be settled to your entire satisfaction. No thanks, I have not deserv'd them.

Ran. Why, this is honest ; continue but in this humour, and faith, sir, you may trust me to run about your house like a spaniel. I cannot sufficiently admire the whimsicalness of my good fortune, in being so instrumental to this general happiness. Bellamy, Frankly, I wish you joy with all my heart, though I had rather you should be married than I, for all that. Never did matrimony appear to me with a smile upon her face till this instant.

*Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,
When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair,
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.*

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls.





Drawn & Engraved by T. Wageman 1819

MR. LEWITZER,
AS DOCTOR CAUS.

Orberry's Edition.

THE MERRY
WIVES OF WINDSOR,

A COMEDY;

By *W. Shakspeare.*

WITH PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE ONLY EDITION EXISTING WHICH IS FAITHFULLY MARKED
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Remarks.

MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

This delightful comedy is perfect, if the term, perfection can be applied to any creation of human genius. Its general merit has been much undervalued by directing the attention solely to Falstaff, and then comparing him with the Falstaff of the two *Henries*; between the two there can be no comparison, but the play is to be tried as a whole, not by the value of a single character; and still less by comparing that character to one of unrivalled excellence. In criticising this comedy we should consider *Slender*, and *Shallow*, and *Caius*, and the *Parson*, and *Dame Quickly*; all of which characters are continued with unbroken consistency to the end. The plot too is no less admirable, though it is constructed on very different principles from those which govern the modern drama. Plot, with the poets of the old school, was subservient to character and passion; indeed it was nothing more than a vehicle for their exhibition; with us the fable is a primary object; we look for a multitude of events; expectation must be awakened by mystery and gratified by surprise; every incident must be touched with a rapid hand, and the whole in fact, must be a dramatized romance. That plays, so constructed, cannot last beyond the hour is sufficiently evident; when once seen their interest ceases, for that interest is in mystery or surprise, neither of which consist with a previous knowledge. This evil is in a great measure to be attributed to the superabundance of criticism, which daily, and weekly, and monthly, and quarterly, is assailing authors; they are not left

to their own discretion, but must subscribe to rules dictated by caprice and supported by ignorance. It is with poetry as with governments; in either case you may legislate too much; in either case a slavish obedience cramps genius, or it rebels, and is destroyed by the power that would fetter it. It was not so in Shakspeare's time; hundreds of Plays remain to us, which notwithstanding many scenes of high energy and high poetic feeling would not now be tolerated a single hour, and for no other reason than what in the jargon of modern criticism would be styled the weakness of their plots.

In Master Slender is an admirable example of what is so difficult to be defined, humour; when he would court Anne Page, and, in the lack of matter, takes occasion from the dogs barking, to inquire—"Be there bears in the town?" every reader feels the humour:—While wit seems to consist in the play of words, unequal comparisons, and quaint allusions, humour appears to be a part of character; and its comprehension therefore, is less likely to be confined to one time or one nation.

The line which divides Slender from his cousin, the Justice, is extremely fine, but it is kept inviolate with a skill that may be safely pronounced matchless; both are gulls, that like the citterns of old in the barber's shops, are produced for every one to play upon; but still the characters are so divided in thought, and in the expression, that it is impossible to mistake one, though in the absence of the other. Slender is the shadow of his cousin, and differs from him precisely in the same degree that the shadow does from its substance.

Of Falstaff it is difficult to write in appropriate terms; he is neither just, nor brave, nor wise, nor kind, nor temperate, nor generous, but the very opposite of all these; and yet he excites as much sympathy as if he possessed every virtue under heaven; when he cheats, and betrays, and plunders, his victims excite derision, such is the force of his wit and humour. The right of compassion seems not to extend to their case, and when at last he

is punished, I know not whether more regret is not excited that his wit is foiled, than pleasure that his vice is punished.

But the beauty of this comedy is not confined to its individual character ; as a whole it ^{is} a composition of the highest orders in which light and shadow are blended with matchless skill. Each character is admirably calculated for the display of those around it ; the various persons act upon each other with the reciprocity of the various parts in a landscape ; it is not only this oak is beautiful, or that mountain lofty, or the near river magnificent ; it is, that the individual parts harmonize ; each becoming more beautiful in itself as it adds to the beauty of the whole.

Time of Representation.

The time this piece takes in representation, is one hour and forty-five minutes. The first act occupies the space of twenty-four minutes;—the second, eighteen;—the third, thirty-nine;—the fourth, fourteen; and the fifth, ten. The half price commences, generally, at about half past eight.

Stage Directions.

| | | |
|-------------|---------------|------------------|
| By R.H..... | is meant..... | Right Hand. |
| L.H..... | | Left Hand. |
| S.E..... | | Second Entrance. |
| U.E..... | | Upper Entrance. |
| M.D..... | | Middle Door. |
| D.F..... | | Door in flat. |
| R.H.D..... | | Right Hand Door. |
| L.H.D..... | | Left Hand Door. |

Costume.

SIR JOHN FALSTAFF.

Scarlet cloak, buff jacket, and scarlet breeches, black velvet hat, and boots.

SHALLOW.

Brown old English dress, trimmed with orange.

SLENDER.

White old English dress, trimmed with crimson.

FENTON.

Green old English dress, trimmed with orange colour.

Mr. PAGE.

Slate coloured old English dress, trimmed with crimson.

Mr. FORD.

Drab coloured old English dress, trimmed with green.

Sir H. EVANS.

Black old English dress.

Dr. CAIUS.

Black coat and breeches, brocaded waistcoat, red cloak and muff.

BARDOLPH.

Black old English dress, trimmed with scarlet.

PISTOL.

Buff leather old English dress, trimmed with scarlet.

SIMPLE.

Orange coloured old English dress, trimmed with green.

NYM.

Drab coloured old English dress, trimmed with green.

Mrs. FORD.

Black velvet gown, ditto stomacher, laced with blue; blue satin petticoat, point apron; black velvet hat, trimmed with beads and blue satin ribbon.

Mrs. PAGE.

A dress like Mrs. Ford's.

ANNE PAGE.

Pink sarsnet petticoat, black velvet body with tabs, trimmed with pink; black velvet hat, trimmed with beads and pink ribbon.

Mrs. QUICKLY.

Black silk gown, scarlet petticoat, point apron, and black hat, trimmed with scarlet.

Persons Represented.

| | <i>Drury-lane.</i> | <i>Covent-garden.*</i> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Sir John Falstaff'</i> | Mr. S. Kemble. | Mr. Fawcett. |
| <i>Justice Shallow</i> | Mr. Carr. | Mr. Simmons. |
| <i>Abraham Slender</i> | Mr. Oxberry. | Mr. Liston. |
| <i>Fenton</i> | Mr. Barnard. | Mr. Claremont. |
| <i>Ford</i> | Mr. Rae. | { Mr. Kemble. |
| | | { Mr. Terry. |
| <i>Page</i> | Mr. Bengough. | Mr. Barrymore. |
| <i>Doctor Caius.....</i> | Mr. Wewitzer. | Mr. Farley. |
| <i>Hugh Evans.....</i> | Mr. Gattie. | Mr. Blanchard. |
| <i>Host</i> | Mr. Williams. | Mr. Hammerton. |
| <i>Bardolph</i> | Mr. Cooke. | Mr. Jefferies. |
| <i>Pistol.....</i> | Mr. Cowell. | Mr. Atkins. |
| <i>Nym</i> | Mr. Evans. | Mr. King. |
| <i>Robin... ..</i> | Mr. Hughes. | Master Chapman. |
| <i>Simple</i> | Mr. Minton. | Mr. Menage. |
| <i>Rugby</i> | Miss C. Carr. | Mr. Yarnold. |
| <i>Mrs. Ford.....</i> | Mrs. Harlowe. | Mrs. Egerton. |
| <i>Mrs. Page.....</i> | Mrs. Mardyn. | Mrs. Gibbs. |
| <i>Anne Page</i> | Mrs. Robinson. | Miss Bristow. |
| <i>Mrs. Quickly</i> | Mrs. Sparks. | Mrs. Davenport. |

Fairies, &c. &c.

SCENE.—Windsor.

THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Before Page's House.*

Enter SHALLOW, EVANS, *and* SLENDER, L.H.

Shal. Sir Hugh, persuade me not: I will make a Star-chamber matter of it: if he were twenty Sir John Falstaff's, he shall not abuse Robert Shallow, esquire.

Slen. In the county of Gloster, justice of peace, and *coram*.

Shal. Ay, cousin Slender, and *cust-alorum*.

Slen. Ay, and *ratolorum* too; and a gentleman born, master parson; who writes himself, *armigero*; in any bill, warrant, quittance, or obligation, *armigero*.

Shal. Ay, that we do; and have done any time these three hundred years.

Slen. All his successors, gone before him, have done't; and all his ancestors, that come after him,

may: they may give the dozen white luses in their coat.

Shal. It is an old coat.

Eva. The dozen white louses do become an old coat well; it agrees well, passant: it is a familiar beast to man, and signifies—love.

Slen. I may quarter, coz?

Shal. You may, by marrying.

Eva. It is marring, indeed, if he quarter it.

Shal. Not a whit.

Eva. Yes, py'r-lady; if he has a quarter of your coat, there is but three skirts for yourself, in mysimple conjectures; but that is all one. If Sir John Falstaff have committed disparagements unto you, I will be glad to do my benevolence, to make atonements and compromises between you.

Shal. Ha! o'my life, if I were young again, the sword should end it.

Eva. It is petter that friends is the sword, and end it: and there is also another device in my prain, which, peradventure, prings goot discretions with it. There is Anne Page, which is daughter to master George Page, which is pretty virginity.

Slen. Mistress Anne Page? she has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman.

Eva. It is that fery verson for all the'orld, as just as you will desire; and seven hundred pounds of monies, and gold, and silver, is her grandsire, upon his death's-bed, give, when she is able to overtake seventeen years old: it were a goot motion, if we leave our pribbles and prabbles, and desire a marriage between master Abraham, and mistress Anne Page.

Shal. Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pounds?

Eva. Ay, and her father is make her a petter penny.

Shal. I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

Eva. Seven hundred pounds, and possibilities, is
! gifts.

Shal. Well, let us see honest master Page : is Falstaff there ?

Eva. Shall I tell you a lie ? I do despise a liar, as I do despise one that is false ; or, as I despise one that is not true. The knight, Sir John, is there ; and, I beseech you, be ruled by your well-willers. I will peat the door for master Page. (*Crosses and knocks at R.H.D.*) What, hoa ! 'pless your house here !

Enter PAGE, R.H.D.

Page. Who's there ?

Eva. Here is your friend, and justice Shallow : and here young master Slender ; that, peradventures, shall tell you another tale, if matters grow to your likings.

Page. I am glad to see your worships well : I thank you for my venison, master Shallow.

Shal. Master Page, I am glad to see you ; much good do it your good heart ! I wish'd your venison better ; it was ill kill'd :—how doth good mistress Page ?—and I thank you always with my heart, la ; with my heart.

Page. Sir, I thank you.—I am glad to see you, good master Slender.

Slender. How does your fallow greyhound, sir ? I heard say, he was outrun on Cotsale. (1)

Page. It could not be judg'd, sir.

Shal. Is Sir John Falstaff here ?

Page. Sir, he is within ; and I would I could do a good office between you.

Eva. It is spoke as a christians ought to speak.

Shal. He hath wrong'd me, master Page.

Page. Sir, he doth in some sort confess it.

Shal. If it be confess'd, it is not redress'd ; is not that so, master Page ? He hath wrong'd me ; indeed, he hath ;—at a word, he hath ; believe me ; Robert Shallow, esquire, saith, he is wrong'd.

Page. Here comes Sir John.

(1) Cotswold, in Gloucestershire.

*Enter FALSTAFF, ROBIN, BARDOLPH, PISTOL, and
NYM, R.H.D.*

(Falstaff's Party retire a little up the Stage, L.H.)

Fal. Now, master Shallow; you'll complain of me to the king?

Shal. Knight, you have beaten my men, kill'd my deer, and broke open my lodge.

Fal. But not kiss'd your keeper's daughter?

Shal. Tut, a pin! this shall be answer'd.

Fal. I will answer it straight;—I have done all this:—that is now answer'd.

Shal. The counsel shall know this.

Fal. 'Twere better for you, if it were known in counsel; you'll be laugh'd at.

Eva. *Pauca verba*, Sir John; good worts.

Fal. Good worts! good cabbage: (1)—Slender, I broke your head; what matter have you against me?

Slen. Marry, sir, I have matter in my head against you: and against your coney-catching rascals, (2) Bardolph, Nym, and Pistol. They carried me to the tavern, and made me drunk, and afterwards picked my pocket.

Bar. *(Advancing.)* You Banbury cheese!

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Pist. *(Advancing.)* How now, Mephostophilus? (3)
(Retires again.)

Slen. Ay, it is no matter.

Nym. *(Advancing.)* Slice, I say: slice! that's my humour.
(Retires again.)

Slen. Where's Simple, my man?—Can you tell, cousin?
(Retires up the Stage, R.H.)

Eva. Peace; I pray you! Now let us understand: There is three umpires in this matter, as I understand: that is—mäster Page, *fidelicet*, master Page; and there

(1) Worts was the ancient name of all the cabbage kind.

(2) Cheats, sharpers.

(3) The name of a spirit, or familiar.

is myself, *fidelicet*, myself; and the three party is, lastly and finally, mine Host of the Garter.

Page. We three, to hear it, and end it between them.

Eva. Fery goot: I will make a prief of it in my note-book; and we will afterwards'ork upon the cause, with as great discreetly as we can.

Fal. Pistol,—

Pist. (*Advancing.*) He hears with ears.

Eva. What phrase is this, *He hears with ear*? Why, it is affectations.

Fal. Pistol, did you pick master Slender's purse?

Slen. Ay, by these gloves did he, (or I would I might never come in mine own great chamber again else,) of seven groats in mill-sixpences,(1) and two Edward shovel-boards,(2) that cost me two shilling and two pence a picce of Yead Miller, by these gloves.

Fal. Is this true, Pistol?

Eva. No; it is false, if it is a pick-purse.

Pist. Ha, thou mountain-foreigner!—Sir John, and master mine,

I combat challenge of this latten (3) bilbo:

Word of denial in thy labras(4) here; (*To Slender.*)

Word of denial: froth and scum, thou liest.

Slen. By these gloves, then 'twas he.

Nym. Be advis'd, sir, and pass good humours: I will say, *marry trap*, (5) with you, if you run the nut-hook's humour on me; (6) that is the very note of it.

Slen. By this hat then he in the red face had it: for though I cannot remember what I did when you made me drunk, yet I am not altogether an ass.

(1) Formerly used as counters to cast up money.

(2) The game of Shovel-board (Shuffle-board) was played with the broad shillings of Edward VI.

(3) Litten may signify no more than *as thin as a lath*. The word in some counties is still pronounced as if there was no *h* in it: and Ray, in his Dictionary of North Country Words, affirms it to be spelt *lat*, in the North of England.

(4) Lips.

(5) When a man was caught in his own stratagems, the exclamation of insult was *marry trap*.

(6) If you say I am a thief.

Fal. What say you, Scarlet and John?

Bard. Why, sir, for my part, I say, the gentleman had drunk himself out of his five sentences.

Eva. It is his five senses: fie, what the ignorance is!

Bard. And being fap,(1) sir, was, as they say, cashier'd; and so conclusions pass'd the careires.(2)

Slen. Ay, you spake in Latin then too; but 'tis no matter: I'll never be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil company, for this trick: if I be drunk, I'll be drunk with those that have the fear of heaven, and not with drunken knaves.

Eva. So heaven 'udge me, that is a virtuous mind.

Fal. 'You hear all these matters denied gentlemen; you hear it.

Enter ANNE PAGE, R.H.D. with Wine.

Page. Nay, daughter, carry the wine in; we'll drink within.

[*Exit, A. Page, R.H.D.*

Slen. O heaven! this is mistress Anne Page.

(*All but Falstaff retire up the Stage.*)

Enter Mrs. FORD, L.H. Mrs. PAGE, R.H.D.

Page. How, now, mistress Ford?

Fal. Mistress Ford, by my troth, you are very well met: by your leave, good mistress. (*Kissing her.*)

Page. Wife, bid these gentlemen welcome.—Come, we have a hot venison pasty to dinner; come, gentlemen, I hope we shall drink down all unkindness.

[*Exeunt all but Shallow, Slender, and Evans, R.H.D. Mrs. Ford, and Mrs. Page, arm in arm with Falstaff.*

Slen. I had rather than forty shillings I had my book of songs and sonnets here:—

Enter SIMPLE, L.H.

How now, Simple! where have you been? I must

and so in the end he reeled about with a circuitous notion
horse passing a carrier,

wait on myself, must I? You have not the book of riddles about you, have you?

Sim. Book of riddles! why, did you not lend it to Alice Shortcake, upon Allhallowmas last, a fortnight afore Michaelmas?

Shal. (R.H.) Come, coz; come, coz; we stay for you. A word with you, coz: marry, this coz; there is, 'as 'twere, a tender, a kind of tender, made afar off, by Sir Hugh, here; do you understand me?

Slen. (In centre.) Ay, sir, you shall find me reasonable; if it be so, I shall do that that is reason.

Shal. Nay, but understand me.

Slen. So I do, sir.

Eva. (L.H.) Give ear to his motions, master Slender: I will description the matter to you, if you be capacity of it.

Slen. Nay, I will do, as my cousin Shallow says: I pray you, pardon me; he's a justice of peace in his country, simple though I stand here.

Eva. But that is not the question; the question is concerning your marriage.

Shal. Ay, there's the point, sir.

Eva. Marry, is it; the very point of it;—to mistress Anne Page.

Slen. Why, if it be so, I will marry her, upon any reasonable demands.

Eva. But can you affection the 'oman? Let us command to know that of your mouth, or of your lips; for divers philosophers hold, that the lips is parcel of the mouth; therefore, precisely, can you carry your goodwill to the maid?

Shal. Cousin Abraham Slender, can you love her?

Slen. I hope, sir, I will do as it shall become one that would do reason.

Eva. Nay, you must speak possitable, if you can carry her your desires towards her.

Shal. That you must: Will you, upon good dowry, marry her?

Slen. I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason.

Shal. Nay, conceive me, conceive me, sweet coz ; what I do, is to pleasure you, coz : Can you love the maid ?

Slen. I will marry her, sir, at your request ; but if there be no great love in the beginning, yet heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married, and have more occasion to know one another : I hope, upon familiarity will grow more contempt ; but if you say, *marry her*, I will marry her, that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely.

Eva. It is a fery discretion answer : save, the faul' is in the 'ort dissolutely ; the 'ort is, according to our meaning, resolutely ;—his meaning is good.

Shal. Ay, I think my cousin meant well.

Slen. Ay, or else I would I might be hang'd, la.

Enter ANNE PAGE, R.H.D.

Shal. Here comes fair mistress Anne :—Would I were young, for your sake, mistress Anne !

Anne. The dinner is on the table ; my father desires your worships' company.

Shal. I will wait on him, fair mistress Anne.

[*Exit.* R.H.D.]

Eva. Od's plessed will ! I will not be absence at the grace.

[*Crosses, and Exit,* R.H.D.]

Anne. Will 't please your worship to come in, sir ?

Slen. No, I thank you, forsooth, heartily ; I am very well.

Anne. The dinner attends you, sir.

Slen. I am not a-hungry, I thank you, forsooth :—Go, sirrah, for all you are my man, go, wait upon my cousin Shallow :—

[*Simple Crosses to R.H. and Exit,* R.H.D.]

A justice of peace sometime may be beholden to his friend for a man :—I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead : But what though ? yet I live like a poor gentleman born.

Anne. I may not go in without your worship ; they not sit, till you come.

Slén. I'faith, I'll eat nothing : I thank you as much as though I did.

Anne. I pray you, sir, walk in.

Slén. I had rather walk here, I thank you : I bruised my shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence ; three veneys(1) for a dish of stewed prunes ; and, by my troth, I cannot abide the smell of hot meat since.—Why do your dogs bark so ? Be there bears i'the town ?

Anne. I think, there are, sir ; I heard them talk'd of.

Slén. I love the sport well ; but I shall as soon quarrel at it, as any man in England :—You are afraid, if you see the bear loose, are you not ?

Anne. Ay, indeed, sir.

Slén. That's meat and drink to me now ; I have seen Sackerson(2) loose, twenty times ; and have taken him by the chain : but I warrant you, the women have so cried and shriek'd at it, that it passed ; (3)—but women, indeed, cannot abide 'em ; they are very ill-favour'd rough things.

Enter PAGE, R.H.D.

Page. Come, gentle master Slender, come ; we stay for you.

Slén. I'll eat nothing ; I thank you, sir.

Page. By cock and pye, you shall not choose, sir ; come, come. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Slén. Nay, pray you, lead the way.

Anne. Come on, sir.

Slén. Mistress Anne, yourself shall go first.

Anne. Not I, sir ; pray you, keep on.

Slén. Truly, I will not go first ; truly-la : I will not do you that wrong.

Anne. I pray you, sir.

(1) Venues, French. Three different set-to's, bouts, or hits.

(2) The name of a bear that was exhibited in our author's time at Paris-garden, in Southwark.

(3) That it exceeded every thing.

Slau. I'll rather be unmannerly, than troublesome :
(Crosses to R.H.) you do yourself wrong, indeed-
 la. *[Exeunt, R.H.D.]*

SCENE II.—*A Room in Page's House.*

Enter EVANS, with a letter, and SIMPLE, R.H.

Eva. Go your ways, and ask of Dr. Caius' house, which is the way : and there dwells one mistress Quickly, which is in the manner of his nurse, or his dry nurse, or his cook, or his laundry, his washer, and his wringer.

Sim. Well, sir.

Eva. Nay, it is petter yet :—give her this letter ; for it is a 'oman that altogether's acquaintance with mistress Anne Page ; and the letter is, to desire and require her to solicit your master's desires to mistress Anne Page : I pray you, begone. *[Exit Simple, L.H.]*
 I will make an end of my dinner ; there's pippins and cheese to come. *[Exit, R.H.]*

SCENE III.—*The Garter Inn.*

Enter FALSTAFF, PISTOL, NYM, and ROBIN, R.H.

Fal. Which of you know Ford, of this town ?

Pist. I ken the wight ; he is of substance good.

Fal. My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.

Pist. Two yards, and more.

Fal. No quips now, Pistol : Indeed I am in the waist two yards about ; but I am now about no waste, I am about thrift. Briefly, I do mean to make love to Ford's wife ; I spy entertainment in her ; she discourses, she carves, she gives the leer of invitation : I can construe the action of her familiar style ; and the hardest voice of her behaviour, to be English'd rightly, is, *from Sir John Falstaff's.*

Pist. He hath studied her well ; and translated(1) her well, out of honesty into English.

Fal. Now, the report goes, she has all the rule o her husband's paise ; she hath a legion of angels.

Nym. The humour rises ; it is good : humour me the angels.

Fal. I have writ me here a letter to her : and here another to Page's wife ; who even now gave me good eyes too, examin'd my parts with most judicious eye-lids : (2) sometimes the beam of her view gilded my foot, sometimes my portly belly.—

Pist. Then did the sun on dunghill shine.

Nym. I thank thee for that humour.

Fal. O, she did so course-o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention,(3) that the appetite of her eye did seem to scorch me up like a burning-glass !— She bears the purse too ; she is a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty. I will be cheater(4) to them both, and they shall be exchequers to me ; they shall be my East and West Indies, and I will trade to them both. Go, bear thou this letter to mistress Page ; and thou this to mistress Ford : we will thrive, lads, we will thrive

Pist. Shall I Sir Pandarus of Troy become, And by my side wear steel ? Then, Lucifer take all !

Nym. I will run no base humour : here, take the humour letter ; I will keep the 'haviour of reputation.

Fal. Hold, sirrah, (*To Rob.*) bear you these letters tightly ;(5) Sail like my pinnacle to these golden shores.

[*Exit Robin, L.H.D*

Rogues, hence ! avaunt ! vanish like hail stones, go : Trudge, plod, away, o' the hoof : seek shelter, pack !

(*Driving them round the stage.*)

Falstaff will learn the humour of this age,

(1) Explained.

(2) This word is differently spelt in all the copies. We should write oëillades. French.

(3) Eagerness of desire.

Escheatour, an officer in the Exchequer.
Cleverly, adroitly.

French thrift, you rogues : myself, and skirted page.

[*Exit*, L.H.]

Nym. I have operations in my head, which be humours of revenge.

Pist. Wilt thou revenge ?

Nym. By welkin, and her star !

Pist. With wit, or steel ?

Nym. With both the humours, I :

I will discuss the humour of this love to Page.

Pist. And I to Ford shall eke unfold,

How Falstaff, varlet vile,

His dove will prove, his gold will hold,

And his soft couch defile. [*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE IV.—*Dr. Caius's House.*

Enter Mrs. QUICKLY, with a Letter, and SIMPLE,
R.H.

Quick. What ; John Rugby !—

Enter RUGBY, L.H.

I pray thee, go to the casement, and see if you can see my master, master Doctor Caius, coming : if he do, i'faith, and find any body in the house, here will be an old abusing of the king's English.

Rug. I'll go watch.

Quick. Go ; and we'll have a posset for't soon at night, in faith, at the latter end of a sea-coal fire. (1)

[*Exit Rugby*, L.H.]

An honest, willing, kind fellow, as ever servant shall come in house withal ; and, I warrant you, no tell-tale, nor no breed-bate : (2) his worst fault is, that he is given to prayer ; he is something peevish (3) that way : but no body but has his fault ;—but let that pass. Peter Simple you say your name is ?

(1) That is, when my master is in bed.

(2) *Bate*, is an obsolete word, signifying strife, contention.

(3) Foolish.

Sim. Ay, for fault of a better.

Quick. And master Slender's your master?

Sim. Ay, forsooth.

Quick. A softly-sprighted man, is he not?

Sim. Ay, forsooth; but he is as tall a man of his hands,(1) as any is between this and his head; he hath fought with a warriener.

Quick. How say you?—O, I should remember him: Does he not hold up his head, as it were? and strut in his gait?

Sim. Yes, indeed does he.

Quick. Well, heaven send Anne Page no worse fortune! Tell master Parson Evans I will do what I can for your master: Anne is a good girl, and I wish—

Enter RUGBY, L.H.

Rug. Out, alas! here comes my master.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Quick. We shall all be shent:(2) Run in here good young man; go into this closet.

(*Shuts Simple in the Closet, R.H.*)

He will not stay long.—What, John Rugby! John, what John, I say!—Go, John, go inquire for my master; I doubt, he be not well, that he comes not home: *and down, down, a down-a, &c.* (*Singing.*)

Enter DOCTOR CAIUS, L.H.

Caius. Vat is you sing? I do not like dese toys; Pray you, go and vetch me in my closet *un boitier verd*; a box, a green-a box: Do intend vat I speak? a green-a box.

Quick. Ay, forsooth, I'll fetch it you.—I am glad he went not in himself: if he had found the young

(1) Perhaps this is an allusion to the jockey measure, *so many hands high*, used by grooms when speaking of horses. *Tall*, in Shakspear's time, signified not only height of stature, but stoutness of body.

(2) Scolded, roughly treated.

man, he would have been horn-mad.

[Exit, into R.H. Closet.

Caius. *Fe, fe, fe, fe ! ma, foi, il fait fort chaud.*
Je m'en vais à la Cour, — la grande affaire.

Re-enter MRS. QUICKLY, with a green Box.

Quick. Is it this, sir ?

Caius. *Ouy ; mette le au mon pocket.* *Depêche*
quickly ; — Vere is dat knave Rugby ?

Quick. What, John Rugby ! John !

Enter RUGBY, L.H.

Rug. Here, sir.

Caius. You are John Rugby, and you are Jack Rugby ; Come, take-a your rapier, and come after my heel to de court.

Rug. 'Tis ready, sir, here in the porch.

Caius. By my trot, I tarry too long : — Od's me !
Qu'ay j'oubliè ? dere is some simples in my closet, dat I vill not for the varld I shall leave behind.

[Exit R.H. Closet.

Quick. Ah me ! he'll find the young man there, and be mad.

Caius. (*Within.*) *O diable ! diable !* Vat is in my closet ! — Villainy, *larron !* Rugby, my rapier !

Enter CAIUS, pulling SIMPLE out of the Closet.

Quick. Good master, be content.

Caius. Verefore shall I be content-a ?

Quick. The young man is an honest man.

Caius. Vat shall de honest man do in my closet ?
dere is no honest man dat shall come in my closet.

Quick. I beseech you, be not so flegmatic ; hear the truth of it. He came of an errand to me from parson Hugh.

Caius. Vell.

Sim. Ay, forsooth, to desire her to —

Quick. Peace, I pray you.

Caius. Peace-a your tongue:—Speak-a your tale.

Sim. To desire this honest gentlewoman, your maid, to speak a good word to mistress Anne Page for my master, in the way of marriage.

Quick. This is all, indeed, la; but I'll never put my finger in the fire, and need not.

Caius. Sir Hugh send-a you?—Rugby, *baillex* me some paper:—'Tarry you a little while.

[*Exeunt Caius and Rugby, R.H. Closet.*]

Quick. I am glad he is so quiet: if he had been thoroughly moved, you should have heard him so loud, and so melancholy;—But notwithstanding, man, I'll do your master what good I can: and the very yea and the no is, the French doctor, my master,—I may call him my master, look you, for I keep his house; and I wash, wing, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself.

Sim. 'Tis a great charge, to come under one body's hand.

Quick. Are you avis'd o' that? You shall find it a great charge: And to be up early, and down late;—but notwithstanding, (to tell you in your ear; I would have no words of it:) my master himself is in love with mistress Anne Page: but, notwithstanding that,——I know Anne's mind,——that's neither here nor there.

Enter CAIUS and RUGBY, from the Closet.

Caius. You jack'nape; give-a dis letter to Sir Hugh: by gar, it is a shallenge: I vill cut his troat in de Park; and I vill teach a scurvy jack-a-nape priest to meddle or make:——you may be gone; it is not good you tarry here. [*Exit Simple, L.H.*]

Quick. Alas, he speaks but for his friend.

Caius. It is no matter-a for dat:——do not you tell-a me dat I shall have Anne Page for myself?—By gar, I vill kill de Jack(1) priest: and I vill appoint

mine host of *de Jarterre* to measure our weapon;—
By gar, I vill myself have Anne Page.

Quick. Sir, the maid loves you, and all shall be well: we must give folks leave to prate.

Caius. Rugby, come to the court vit me.—By gar, if I have not Anne Page, I shall turn your head out of my door:—Follow my heels, Rugby.

[*Exeunt Caius and Rugby, L.H.*]

Quick. You shall have An fools-head of your own. No, I know Anne's mind for that; never a woman in Windsor knows more of Anne's mind than I do; nor can do more than I do with her, I thank heaven.

Fent. (*Within, L.H.*) Who's within there, ho?

Quick. Who's there, I trow?

Enter FENTON, L.H.D.

Fent. How now, good woman; how dost thou?

Quick. The better, that it pleases your good worship to ask.

Fent. What news? how does pretty mistress Anne?

Quick. In truth, sir, and she is pretty, and honest, and gentle; and one that is your friend, I can tell you that by the way; I praise heaven for it.

Fent. Shall I do any good, thinkest thou? shall I not lose my suit?

Quick. Troth, sir, all is in his hands above: but notwithstanding, master Fenton, I'll be sworn on a book, she loves you.—Have not your worship a wart above your eye?

Fent. Yes, marry, have I; what of that?

Quick. Well, thereby hangs a tale;—good faith, it is such another Nan;—but I detest(1) an honest maid as ever broke bread:—we had an hour's talk of that wart;—I *shall never laugh but in that maid's company!—But, indeed, she is given too much to allicholly(2) and musing: But for you—Well,—go to.

Fent. Well, I shall see her to-day. Hold, there's

money for thee; let me have thy voice in my behalf: if thou seest her before me, commend me—

Quick. Will I? ay, i' faith, that we will, and I will tell your worship more of the wart the next time we have confidence; and of other wooers.

Fent. Well, farewell; I am in great haste now.

[*Exit, L.H.D.*]

Quick. Farewell to your worship.—Truly, an honest gentleman; but Anne loves him not; I know Anne's mind as well as another does:—Out upon't! what have I forgot?

[*Exit, R.H.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Before Page's House.*

Enter MRS. PAGE, reading a Letter, R.H.D.

Mrs. Page. What, have I 'scap'd love-letters in the holiday-time of my beauty, and am I now a subject for them? Let me see:

(*Reads.*)—*Ask me no reason why I love you; for, though love use reason for his precisian, he admits him not for his counsellor: You are not young, no more am I; go to then, there's sympathy: you are merry, so am I: Ha! ha! then there's more sympathy: You love sack, and so do I: Would you desire better sympathy? Let it suffice thee, mistress Page, (at the least, if the love of a soldier can suffice,) that I love thee: I will not say, pity me! 'tis not a soldier-like phrase; but I say, love me.—By me,*

*Thine own true knight,
By day or night,
Or any kind of light,
With all his might,
For thee to fight.*

John Falstaff.

What a Herod of Jewry is this!—O wicked, wicked world!—What an unweigh'd behaviour has this Flemish drunkard pick'd out of my conversation, that he dares in this manner assay me? Why, he hath not been thrice in my company!—How shall I be reveng'd on him? for reveng'd I will be, as sure as—

Enter MRS. FORD, L.H.

Mrs. Ford. Mrs. Page! trust me, I was going to your house.

Mrs. Page. And trust me, I was coming to you.—You look very ill.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I'll ne'er believe that; I have to show to the contrary.

Mrs. Page. 'Faith, but you do, in my mind.

Mrs. Ford. Well, I do then: yet, I say, I could show you to the contrary: O, mistress Page, give me some counsel!

Mrs. Page. What's the matter, woman?

Mrs. Ford. O woman, if it were not for one trifling respect, I could come to such honour!

Mrs. Page. Hang the trifle, woman; take the honour: What is it?—dispense with trifles;—what is it?

Mrs. Ford. I could be knighted.

Mrs. Page. What?—Thou liest.

Mrs. Ford. We burn day-light: (1)—here, read, read;—perceive how I might be knighted.—I shall think the worse of fat men, as long as I have an eye to make difference of men's liking. (2) And yet he would not swear; praised women's modesty; and gave such orderly and well-behaved reproof to all uncomeliness, that I would have sworn his disposition would have gone to the truth of his words; but they do no more adhere and keep place together than the hundredth psalm to the tune of *Green Sleeves*. What tempest, I trow, threw this whale, with so many tuns of oil in his

(1) We waste time.

(2) Men's condition of body.

belly, ashore at Windsor?—How shall I be reveng'd on on him?—Did you ever hear the like?

Mrs. Page. Letter for letter; but that the name of Page and Ford differs!—To thy great comfort in this mystery of ill opinions; here's the twin-brother of thy letter: but let thine inherit first; for, I protest, mine never shall. I warrant, he hath a thousand of these letters, writ with blank space for different names.

Mrs. Ford. Why, this is the very same: the very hand, the very words:—What doth he think of us?

Mrs. Page. Nay, I know not: It makes me almost ready to wrangle with mine own honesty. I'll entertain myself like one that I am not acquainted withal; for, sure, unless he knew some strain in me, that I know not myself, he would never have boarded me in this fury.

Mrs. Ford. Boarding, call you it?

Mrs. Page. Let's be reveng'd on him: let's appoint him a meeting; give him a show of comfort in his suit; and lead him on with a fine-baited delay, till he hath pawn'd his horses to mine host of the Garter.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I will consent to act any villainy against him, that may not sully the chariness of our honesty. Oh, that my husband saw this letter! it would give eternal food to his jealousy.

Mrs. Page. Why, look, where he comes; and my good man too: he's as far from jealousy as I am from giving him cause.

Mrs. Ford. You are the happier woman.

Mrs. Page. Let's consult together against this greasy knight:—Look, who comes yonder.

Mrs. Ford. Mrs. Quickly.

Mrs. Page. She shall be our messenger to this paltry knight.

Mrs. Ford. Trust me, I thought on her; she'll fit it. [*Exeunt, L.H.*]

Enter FORD with PISTOL, and PAGE with NYM, R.H.

Ford. Well, I hope it be not so.

Pist. Hope is a curtail-dog in some affairs :
 Sir John affects thy wife :
 He loves thy gally-mawfry ; Ford, perpend.

Ford. Love my wife ?

Pist. With liver burning hot : Prevent, or go thou,
 Like Sir Actæon he, with Ring wood at thy heels :—
 O, odious is the name !

Ford. What name, sir ?

Pist. The horn, I say : Farewell.
 Take heed ; have open eye ; for thieves do foot by
 night :
 Take heed, ere summer comes, or cuckoo birds do
 sing.—

Away, sir corporal Nym,—

Believe it, Page, he speaks sense. [Exit, R.H.]

Ford. I will be patient ; I will find out this.

Nym. And this is true : I like not the humour of
 lying. He loves your wife ; there's the short and the
 long. My name is corporal Nym ; I speak and I
 avouch. 'Tis true :—my name is Nym, and Falstaff
 loves your wife.—Adieu ! I love not the humour of
 bread and cheese ; and there's the humour of it.—
 Adieu. [Exit, R.H.]

Page. *The humour of it*, quoth'a ! here's a fellow
 frights humour out of his wits.

Ford. I will seek out Falstaff.—If I do find it, well.

Page. I will not believe such a Cataian,⁽¹⁾ though
 the priest o'the town commended him for a true
 man.

Ford. 'Twas a good sensible fellow : Well.

Page. How now, master Ford ?

Ford. You heard what this knave told me : did you
 not ?

Page. Yes ; and you heard what the other told me ?

Ford. Do you think there is truth in them ?

Page. Hang 'em, slaves ! I do not think the knight

(1) Liar. China was anciently called *Cataia* or *Cathay* by the first adventurers that travelled thither, who told such incredible wonders of this new discovered empire, that a notorious liar was actually called a Cataian.

would offer it : but these that accuse him in his intent towards our wives, are a yoke of his discarded men.

Ford. Were they his men?

Page. Marry, were they.

Ford. I like it never the better for that.—Does he lie at the Garter?

Page. Ay, marry, does he. If he should intend this voyage towards my wife, I would turn her loose to him; and what he gets more of her than sharp words let it lie on my head.

Ford. I do not misdoubt my wife; but I would be loth to turn them together: A man may be too confident: I would have nothing lie on my head.—I cannot be thus satisfied.

Page. Look, where my ranting host of the Garter comes: there is either liquor in his pate, or money in his purse, when he looks so merrily.

Enter Host, L.H.

How now, mine host?

Host. How now, bully-rook? Thou'rt a gentleman: cavalero-justice, I say.

Enter SHALLOW, L.H.

Shal. I follow, mine host, I follow.—Good even, and twenty, good master Page! Master Page, will you go with us? we have sport in hand.

Host. Tell him, cavalero-justice; tell him, bully-rook.

Shal. Sir, there is a fray to be fought, between Sir Hugh the Welsh priest, and Caius the French doctor.

Ford. Good mine host o'th' Garter, a word with you.

Host. What say'st thou, bully-rook?

Shal. Will you go with us to behold it? My merry host hath had the measuring of their weapons; and I think he hath appointed them contrary places: for, be-

lieve me, I hear the parson, is no jester. Hark, I will tell you what our sport shall be.

Host. Hast thou no suit against my knight, my guest-cavalier?

Ford. None, I protest! but I'll give you a pottle of burnt sack to give me recourse to him, and tell him, my name is Brook; only for a jest.

Host. My hand, bully: thou shalt have egress and regress; said I well? and thy name shall be Brook: It is a merry knight.—Will you go an-heirs?(1)

[*Exit, L.H.*

Shal. Have with you, mine host.

Page. I have heard, the Frenchman hath good skill in his rapier.

Shal. Tut, sir, I could have told you more: In these times you stand on distance, your passes, stoccadoes, and I know not what: 'tis the heart, master Page; 'tis here, 'tis here. I have seen the time, with my long sword, I would have made you four tall fellows skip like rats.

Enter Host, L.H.

Host. Here, boys, here, here! shall we wag?

Page. Have with you:—I had rather hear them scold than fight.

[*Exeunt Host, Shal. and Page, L.H.*

Ford. Though Page be a secure fool, and stands so firmly on his wife's frailty, yet I cannot put off my opinion so easily: She was in his company at Page's house; and, what they made(2) there, I know not. Well, I will look further into't: and I have a disguise to sound Falstaff: If I find her honest, I lose not my labour; if she be otherwise, 'tis labour well bestow'd.

[*Exit, L.H.*

(1) There can be no doubt this passage is corrupt. Perhaps we should read—Will you go and *hear us?* for Page, says directly after—"I had rather *hear them* scold than fight." There is another reading, which perhaps is the best—"Will you go on, hearts?"

(2) An obsolete phrase, signifying—what they *did* there.

SCENE II.—*The Garter Inn.*

Enter FALSTAFF and PISTOL, L.H.

Fal. I will not lend thee a penny.

• *Pist.* Why, then the world's mine oyster,
Which I with sword will open.—
I will retort the sum in equipage.

Fal. Not a penny. I have been content, sir, you should lay my countenance to pawn: I have grated upon my good friends for three reprieves for you and your coach-fellow,(1) Nym; or else you had look'd through the grate like a geminy of baboons. I am damn'd for swearing to gentlemen my friends, you were good soldiers, and tall fellows: and when mistress Bridget lost the handle of her fan,(2) I took't upon mine honour, thou hadst it not.

Pist. Didst thou not share? hadst thou not fifteen pence?

Fal. Reason, you rogue, reason: 'Think'st thou I'll endanger my soul *gratis*? At a word, hang no more about me, I am no gibbet for you:—go.—You'll not bear a letter for me, you rogue!—you stand upon your honour!—Why, thou unconfinable baseness, it is as much as I can do, to keep the terms of my honour precise. I, I, I myself sometimes, leaving the fear of heaven on the left hand, and hiding mine honour in my necessity, am fain to shuffle, to hedge and to lurch; and yet you, rogue, will ensconce(3) your rags, your

(1) He who *draws* with you; who is joined with you in all your knavery.

(2) Fans, in our author's time, were more costly than they are at present, as well as of a different construction. They consisted of ostrich feathers (or others of equal length and flexibility,) which were stuck into handles. The richer sort of these were composed of gold, silver, or ivory, of curious workmanship.

(3) A *sconce* is a petty fortification. To *ensconce*, therefore, is to protect, as with a fort.

cat-a-mountain looks, your red-lattice phrases,⁽¹⁾ and your bold-beating oaths, under the shelter of your honour! You will not do it, you?

Pist. I do relent: What would'st thou more of man?

Enter ROBIN, L.H.D.

Rob. Sir, here's a woman would speak with you.

Fal. Let her approach. [*Exit Robin, L.H.D.*]

Hence, rogue, avaunt,—go steal, and hang.

[*Exit Pistol, L.H.D.*]

Enter MISTRESS QUICKLY, L.H.D.

Quick. Give your worship good-morrow.

Fal. Good-morrow, good wife

Quick. Not so, an't please your worship.

Fal. Good maid, then.

Quick. I'll be sworn; as my mother was, the first hour I was born.

Fal. I do believe the swearer: What with me?

Quick. Shall I vouchsafe your worship a word or two?

Fal. Two thousand, fair woman; and I'll vouchsafe thee the hearing.

Quick. There is one mistress Ford, sir;—I pray, come a little nearer this ways:—I myself dwell with master Doctor Caius.

Fal. Well, on: Mistress Ford, you say,—

Quick. Your worship says very true: I pray your worship, come a little nearer this ways.

Fal. I warrant thee nobody hears:—Well: Mistress Ford;—what of her?

Quick. Why, sir, she's a good creature. Lord, lord! your worship's a wanton: Well, heaven forgive you, and all of us, I pray!

Fal. Mistress Ford;—come, mistress Ford,—

Quick. Marry, this is the short and the long of it;

(1) *Red lattice* at the doors and windows were formerly the external decorations of an ale-house.

you have brought her into such a canaries,(1) as 'tis wonderful. The best courtier of them all, when the court lay at Windsor,(2) could never have brought her to such a canary. Yet there has been knights, and lords, and gentlemen, with their coaches; I warrant, you, coach after coach, letter after letter, gift after gift; smelling so sweetly, (all musk,) and so rushling, I warrant you, in silk and gold; and in such alligant terms, that would have won any woman's heart; and, I warrant you, they could never get an eye-wink of her.

Fal. But what says she to me? Be brief, my good she Mercury.

Quick. Marry, she hath received your letter; for the which she thanks you a thousand times; and she gives you to notify, that her husband will be absence from his house between ten and eleven.

Fal. Ten and eleven?

Quick. Ay, forsooth; and then you may come and see the picture, she says, that you wot(3) of;—master Ford, her husband, will be from home. Alas! the sweet woman leads an ill life with him; he's a very jealous man; she leads a very frampold(4) life with him, good heart.

Fal. Ten and eleven:—Woman, commend me to her; I will not fail her.

Quick. Why, you say well: But I have another messenger to your worship: Mistress Page hath her hearty commendations to you too;—and, let me tell you in your ear, she's as vartuous a civil modest wife, and one, I tell you, that will not miss you morning nor evening prayer, as any is in Windsor, whoe'er be the other: and she bade me tell your worship, that her husband is

(1) This is the name of a brisk light dance, and therefore is properly enough used in low language for any hurry or perturbation.

(2) Resided there.

(3) To wot, is to know. Obsolete.

(4) *Ray*, among his South and East country words, observes, that *frampald*, or *frampard*, signifies *fretful*, *peevish*, *cross*, *froward*. As *froward* (he adds) comes from *from*; so may *frampard*.

seldom from home; but, she hopes there will come a time. I never knew a woman so dote upon a man; surely, I think you have charms, la; yes, in truth.

Fal. Not I, I assure thee; setting the attraction of my good parts aside, I have no other charms.

Quick. Blessing on your heart for't!

Fal. But, I pray thee, tell me this: has Ford's wife, and Page's wife, acquainted each other how they love me?

Quick. That were a jest; indeed!—they have not so little grace, I hope:—that were a trick, indeed! But mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves; (1) her husband has a marvellous infection to the little page: and truly master Page is an honest man. Never a wife in Windsor leads a better life than she does; do what she will, say what she will, take all, pay all, go to bed when she list, rise when she list, all is as she will; and truly, she deserves it; for if there be a kind woman in Windsor, she is one. You must send her your page; no remedy.

Fal. Why, I will.

Quick. Nay, but do so then: and, look you, he may come and go between you both; and, in any case, have a nay-word, (2) that you may know one another's mind, and the boy never need to understand any thing: for 'tis not good that children should know any wickedness; old folks, you know, have discretion, as they say, and know the world.

Fal. Fare thee well: commend me to them both: there's my purse: I am yet thy debtor.—Boy!—

Enter ROBIN, L.H.D.

go along with this woman.

[*Exeunt Mrs. Quickly and Robin, L.H.D.*

This news distracts me.—Say'st thou so, old Jack? go

(1) *Of all loves*, is an adjuration only, and signifies no more than if she had said, desires you to send him *by all means*.

(2) A *watch-word*.

thy ways ; I'll make more of thy old body than I have done. Will they yet look after thee ? Wilt thou, after the expense of so much money, be now a gainer ? Good body, I thank thee : Let them say, 'tis grossly done ; so it be fairly done, no matter.

Enter BARDOLPH, L.H. with a Cup of Sack.

Bard. Sir John, there's one master Brook below would fain speak with you, and be acquainted with you ; and hath sent your worship a morning's draught of sack.

Fal. Brook, is his name ?

Bard. Ay, sir.

Fal. Call him in.

[Exit Bardolph, L.H.]

Such Brooks are welcome to me, that o'erflow such liquor.—Ah ! ah ! mistress Ford and mistress Page, have I encompass'd you ? go to ; *via* ! (1)

Re-enter BARDOLPH, and FORD disguised, L.H.]

Ford. Bless you, sir.

Fal. And you, sir : would you speak with me ?

Ford. I make bold, to press with so little preparation upon you.

Fal. You're welcome ; What's your will ? Give us leave, drawer. *[Exit Bardolph, L.H.]*

Ford. Sir, I am a gentleman that have spent much ; my name is Brook.

Fal. Good master Brook, I desire more acquaintance of you.

Ford. Good sir John, I sue for yours : not to charge you ; (2) for I must let you understand, I think myself in better plight for a lender than you are ; the which

(1) *Markham* uses this word as one of the vocal helps necessary for reviving a horse's spirits in galloping large rings, when he grows slothful. Hence this cant phrase (perhaps from the Italian, *via*,) may be used on other occasions, to quicken, or pluck up courage.

(2) That is, not with a purpose of putting you to expense, or being burthensome.

hath something embolden'd me to this unseasoned intrusion ; for they say, if money go before, all ways do lie open.

Fal. Money is a good soldier, sir, and will on.

Ford. Troth, and I have a bag of money here troubles me ; if you will help me to bear it, Sir John, take all, or half, for easing me of the carriage.

Fal. Sir, I know not how I may deserve to be your porter.

Ford. I will tell you, sir, if you will give me the hearing.

Fal. Speak, good master Brook ; I shall be glad to be your servant.

Ford. Sir, I will be brief with you :—You have been a man long known to me, though I had never so good means, as desire, to make myself acquainted with you. I shall discover a thing to you, wherein I must very much lay open mine own imperfection : but good Sir John, as you have one eye upon my follies, as you hear them unfolded, turn another into the register of your own, that I may pass with a reproof the easier, sith you yourself know, how easy it is to be such an offender.

Fal. Very well, sir ; proceed.

Ford. There is a gentlewoman in this town, her husband's name is Ford.

Fal. Well, sir.

Ford. I have long lov'd her, and, I protest to you, bestow'd much on her ; follow'd her with a doting observance ; fee'd every slight occasion, that could but niggardly give me sight of her ; briefly, I have pursued her as love hath pursued me, which hath been, on the wing of all occasions. But whatsoever I have merited, either in my mind, or in my means, meed, I am sure I have receiv'd none, unless experience be a jewel ; that I have purchased at an infinite rate ; and that hath taught me to say this :—

*Love like a shadow flies, when substance love pursues ;
Pursuing that that flies, and flying what pursues.*

Fal. Have you received no promise of satisfaction at her hands ?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Have you importuned her to such a purpose ?

Ford. Never.

Fal. Of what quality was your love then ?

Ford. Like a fair house, built upon another man's ground ; so that I have lost my edifice, by mistaking the place where I erected it.

Fal. To what purpose have you unfolded this to me ?

Ford. When I have told you that, I have told you all.—Some say, that though she appear honest to me, yet, in other places, she enlargeth her mirth so far, that there is shrewd construction made of her. Now, Sir John, here is the heart of my purpose : You are a gentleman of excellent breeding, admirable discourse, of great admittance,(1) authentic in your place and person, generally allow'd(2) for your many war-like, courtlike, and learned preparations.

Fal. O, sir !

Ford. Believe it, for you know it :—There is money ; spend it, spend it : spend more ! spend all I have : only give me so much of your time in exchange of it, as to lay an amiable siege(3) to the honesty of this Ford's wife : use your art of wooing, win her to consent to you ; if any man may, you may as soon as any.

Ford. Would it apply well to the vehemency of your affection, that I should win what you would enjoy ! Methinks, you prescribe to yourself very preposterously.

Ford. O, understand my drift : She dwells so securely on the excellency of her honour, that the folly of my soul dares not present itself ; she is too bright to be looked against. Now, could I come to her with any detection in my hand, my desires had instance(4)

(1) Admitted into the first societies.

(2) Approved.

(3) A siege of love.

(4) Example.

and argument to commend themselves: I could drive her then from the ward⁽¹⁾ of her purity, her reputation, her marriage vow, and a thousand other her defences, which now are too strongly embattled against me: What say you to't, Sir John?

Fal. Master Brook, I will first make bold with your money; next, give me your hand; and last, as I am a gentleman, you shall, if you will, enjoy Ford's wife.

Ford. O good sir!

Fal. Master Brook, I say you shall.

Ford. Want no money, Sir John, you shall want none.

Fal. Want no mistress Ford, master Brook, you shall want none.—I shall be with her (I may tell you,) by her own appointment; even as you came in to me: her assistant, or go-between, parted from me: I say, I shall be with her between ten and eleven; for at that time the jealous rascally knave, her husband will be forth. Come you to me at night; you shall know how I speed.

Ford. I am bless'd in your acquaintance.—Do you know Ford, sir?

Fal. Hang him, poor cuckoldly knave!—I know him not:—yet I wrong him to call him poor; they say, the jealous wittolly knave hath masses of money: for the which his wife seems to me well favoured. I will use her as the key of the cuckoldly rogue's coffer; and there's my harvest-home.

Ford. I would you knew Ford, sir; that you might avoid him, if you saw him.

Fal. Hang him, mechanical salt-butter rogue! I will stare him out of his wits; I will awe him with my cudgel: it shall hang like a meteor o'er the cuckold's horns: Master Brook, thou shalt know, I will predominate o'er the peasant, and thou shalt sleep with his wife.—Come to me soon at night:—Ford's a knave, and I will aggravate his style,⁽²⁾ thou, master Brook,

(1) Defence.

(2) *Stile* is a phrase from the Herald's Office. Falstaff means that he will add more titles to those he already enjoys.

shalt know him for knave and cuckold.—Come to me soon at night. *[Exit, L.H.]*

Ford. What a damn'd Epicurean rascal is this!—My heart is ready to crack with impatience.—Who says this is improvident jealousy? My wife hath sent to him, the hour is fix'd, the match is made. Would any man have thought this?—See the hell of having a false woman! my bed shall be abus'd, my coffers ransack'd, my reputation gnawn at; and I shall not only receive this villainous wrong, but stand under the adoption of abominable terms, and by him that does me this wrong. 'Terms! names!—'Amaimon sounds well; Lucifer, well; Barbason, well: yet they are devils' additions, the names of fiends: but cuckold! wittol cuckold! the devil himself hath not such a name.—Page is an ass, a secure ass; he will trust his wife, he will not be jealous: I will rather trust parson Hugh the Welshman, with my cheetse, or a thief to walk my ambling gelding, than my wife with herself: then she plots, then she ruminates, then she devises; and what they think in their hearts they may effect, they will break their hearts but they will effect.—Heaven be prais'd for my jealousy! Ten o'clock the hour;—I will prevent this, detect my wife, be reveng'd on Falstaff, and laugh at Page. I will about it;—better three hours too soon, than a minute too late.—Fie, fie, fie! cuckold! cuckold! cuckold! *[Exit, L.H.]*

SCENE III.—*Windsor Park.*

Enter CAIUS, and RUGBY, R.H.

Caius. Jack Rugby!

Rug. Sir.

Caius. Vat is de clock, Jack?

Rug. 'Tis past the hour, sir, that Sir Hugh promis'd to meet.

Caius. By gar, he has save his soul, dat he is no come; he has pray his Pible vell, dat he is no come: by gar, Jack Rugby, he is dead already, if he be come.

Rug. He is wise, sir ; he knew your worship would kill him.

Caius. By gar, de herring is no dead, so as I vill kill him. Take your rapier, Jack ; I vill tell you how I vill kill him.

Rug. Alas, sir, I cannot fence.

Caius. Villainy, take your rapier.

Rug. Forbear ; here's company.

Enter HOST, SHALLOW, PAGE, and SLENDER, L.H.

Host. 'Bless thee, bully doctor.

Shal. 'Save you, master doctor Caius.

Page. Now, good master doctor !

Slen. Give you good-morrow, sir.

Caius. Vat be all you, one, two, three, four, come for ?

Host. To see thee fight, to see thee foin,(1) to see thee traverse ; to see thee here, to see thee there ; to see thee pass thy punto, thy stock,(2) thy reverse, thy distance, thy montant. Is he dead, my Ethiopian ? is he dead, my Francisco ?(3) ha, bully ! What says my Æsculapius ? my Galen ? my heart of elder ?(4) ha ! is he dead bully Stale ? is he dead ?

Caius. By gar he is de coward of the world ; he is not show his face.

Host. Thou art a Castilian king, Urinal ! Hector of Greece, my boy !

Caius. I pray you, bear vitness that me have stay six or seven, two, tree hours for him, and he is no come.

Shal. He is the wiser man, master doctor : he is a curer of souls, and you a curer of bodies ; if you should fight, you go against the hair(5) of your professions : is it not true, master Page ?

(1) An ancient term for making a thrust in fencing, or tilting.

(2) Stock is a corruption of *stocata*. Ital.

(3) He means Frenchman.

(4) It should be remembered, to make this joke relish, that the elder tree has no heart.

(5) This phrase is proverbial, and is taken from stroking the hair of animals a contrary way to that which it grows.

Page. Master Shallow, you have yourself been a great fighter, though now a man of peace.

Shal. Body-kins, master Page, though now I be old, and of the peace, if I see a sword out, my finger itches to make one; though we are justices, and doctors, and churchmen, master Page; we have some salt of our youth in us; we are the sons of women, master Page.

Page. 'Tis true, master Shallow.

Shal. It will be found so, master Page. Master doctor Caius, I am come to fetch you home. I am sworn of the peace: you have show'd yourself a wise physician, and Sir Hugh hath shown himself a wise and patient churchman: you must go with me, master doctor.

Host. Pardon, guest justice:—A word, monsieur mock water.

Caius. Mock-vater! vat is dat?

Host. Mock-water, in our English tongue, is valour, bully.

Caius. By gar, then I have as much mock-vater as de Englishman:—Scurvy-jack-dog priest! by gar, me vill cut his ears.

Host. He will clapper-claw thee tightly, bully.

Caius. Clapper de-claw! vat is dat?

Host. That is, he will make thee amends.

Caius. By gar, me do look, he shall clapper-de-claw me; for, by gar, me vill have it.

Host. And I will provoke him to't, or let him wag.

Caius. Me tank you for dat.

Host. And moreover, bully,—But first, master guest, and master Page, and eke cavalero Slender, go you through the town to Frogmore. (*Aside to them.*)

Page. Sir Hugh is there, is he?

Host. He is there: see what humour he is in; and I will bring the doctor about by the fields: will it do well?

Shal. We will do it.

All. Adieu, good master doctor.

[*Exeunt Page, Shallow, and Slender, L.H.*]

Caius. By gar, me vill kill de Welshman ; for he speak for a jack-an-ape to Anne Page.

Host. Let him die : but, first, sheath thy impatience ; throw cold water on thy choler : go about the fields with me through Frogmore ; I will bring thee where mistress Anne Page is, at a farm-house a feasting ; and thou shalt woo her : said I well ?

Caius. By gar, me tank you for dat : by gar, I love you ; and I shall procure-a you de good guest, de earl, de knight, de lords, de gentlemen, my patients.

Host. For the which, I will be thy adversary towards Anne Page ; said I well ?

Caius. By gar, 'ts good : vell said.

Host. Let us wag then.

Caius. Come at my heels, Jack Rugby.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*Frogmore.*

Enter EVANS, R.H.U.E. with a Book in his hand, followed by SIMPLE.

Eva. I pray you now, good master Slender's serving-man, and friend Simple by your name, which way have you looked for master Caius, that calls himself *Doctor of Physick* ?

Simp. Marry, sir, the City-ward, the Park-ward, every way : Old Windsor way, and every way but the town way.

Eva. I most feheemently desire you, you will also look that way.

Simp. I will, sir.

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Eva. 'Pless my soul ! how full of cholers I am, and sampling of mind !—I shall be glad if he have de-

ceived me: how melancholies I am!—I will knock his
urinals about his knave's costard, when I have good
opportunities for the 'ork: 'pless my soul!—(*Sings.*)

*By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals;
There will we make our beds of roses,
And a thousand vagrant posies.*

By shallow—

Mercy on me! I have a great dispositions to cry.—
(*Sings.*)

Melodious birds sing madrigals;—

Enter SIMPLE, R.H.

Simp. Yonder he is, coming this way, Sir Hugh.

Eva. He's welcome:—(*Sings.*)

By shallow rivers, to whose falls—

Heaven prosper the right!—What weapons is he?

Simp. No weapons, sir!—There comes my master,
master Shallow, and another gentleman from Frog-
more, over the stile, this way,

Eva. 'Pray you, give me my gown;—or else keep
it in your arms.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER, L.H.

Shal. How now, master parson? Good-morrow,
good Sir Hugh. Keep a gamester from the dice, and
a good student from his book, and it is wonderful.

Slen. Ah, sweet Anne Page!

Page. 'Save you, good sir Hugh!

Eva. 'Pless you from his mercy sake, all of you!

Shal. What! the sword and the word! do you
study them both, master parson?

Page. And youthful still, in your doublet and hose,
this raw rheumatick day?

Eva. There is reasons and causes for it.

Page. We are come to you, to do a good office, master parson.

Eva. Fery well: What is it?

Page. Yonder is a most reverend gentleman, who, belike having receiv'd wrong by some person, is at most odds with his own gravity and patience, that ever you saw.

Shal. I have liv'd forescore years and upward; I never heard a man of his place, gravity, and learning, so wide of his own respect.

Eva. What is he?

Page. I think you know him; master Doctor Caius, the renown'd French physician.

Eva. Heaven's will, and his passion o' my heart! I had as lief you would tell me of a mess of porridge.

Page. Why?

Eva. He has no more knowledge in Hibocrates and Galen,—and he is a knave besides; a cowardly knave, as you would desires to be acquainted withal.

Page. I warrant you, he's the man should fight with him.

Slen. O, sweet Anne Page!

Shal. It appears so, by his weapons:—Keep them asunder;—here comes Doctor Caius.

Enter Host, CAIUS, and RUGBY, R.H.

Page. Nay, good master parson, keep in your weapon.

Shal. So do you, good master doctor.

Host. Disarm them, and let them question; let them keep their limbs whole, and hack our English.

Caius. I pray you, let a-me speak a word vit your ear: Verefore vill you not meet a-me? *(To Eva.)*

Eva. 'Pray you use your patience: in good time.

Caius. By gar, you are de coward, de Jack dog, John ape.

Eva. 'Pray you, let us not be laughing-stogs to other men's humours; I desire you in friendship, and I

will one way or other make you amends :—I will knog your urinals about your knave's cogs-combs, for missing your meetings and appointments.—(*They fight.*)

Caius. *Diuble!*—Jack Rugby,—mine *Host de Jar-terre*,—have I not stay for him, to kill him—have I not, at de place I did appoint?

Eva. As I am a christians soul, now, look you, this is the place appointed; I'll be judgement by mine host of the Garter.

Host. Peace, I say, Gallia and Gaul, French and Welsh, soul-curer and body-curer.

Caius. Ay, dat is very good! excellent!

Host. Peace, I say; hear mine host of the Garter. Am I pointack? am I subtle? am I a Machiavel? Shall I lose my doctor?—no; he gives me the potions, and the motions. Shall I lose my parson? my priest? my Sir Hugh! no; he gives me the pro-verbs and the no-verbs.—Give me thy hand, terrestrial; (*To Caius.*) so:—Give me thy hand, celestial; (*To Eva.*) so.—Boys of art, I have deceiv'd you both; I have directed you to wrong places; your hearts are mighty, your skins are whole, and let burnt sack be the issue.—Come, lay their swords to pawn;—Follow me, lad of peace; follow, follow, follow.

Shal. Trust me, a mad host.—Follow, gentlemen, follow.

Sten. O, sweet Anne Page!

[*Exeunt Host, Shallow, Page, Simple, and Slender, L.H.*]

Caius. Ha! do I perceive dat? have you make-a de sot(1) of us? ha, ha!

Eva. This is well; he has made us his vlouting-stog.—I desire you, that we may be friends; and let us knog our prains together, to be revenge on this same scall,(2) scurvy, cogging companion, the host of the Garter.

Caius. By gar, vit all my heart; he promise to bring me vere is Anne Page: by gar, he deceive me too.

(1) *Sot*, in French, signifies a fool.

(2) *Scall* was an old word of reproach, as *scab* was afterwards.

Eva. Well, I will smite his noddles;—'Pray you follow.
[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter ROBIN, and MRS. PAGE, L.H.

Mrs. Page. Nay, keep your way, little gallant: you were wont to be a follower, but now you are a leader: Whether had you rather lead, mine eyes, or eye your master's heels?

Rob. I had rather, forsooth, go before you like a man, than follow him like a dwarf.

Mrs. Page. O, you are a flattering boy; now I see you'll be a courtier.

Enter FORD, R.H.

Ford. Well met, mistress Page: whither go you?

Mrs. Page. Truly, sir, to see your wife: Is she at home?

Ford. Ay; and as idle as she may hang together, for want of company; I think, if your husbands were dead, you two would marry.

Mrs. Page. Be sure of that,—two other husbands.

Ford. Where had you this pretty weather-cock?

Mrs. Page. I cannot tell what the dickens his name is my husband had him of.—What do you call your knight's name, sirrah?

Rob. Sir John Falstaff.

Ford. Sir John Falstaff!

Mrs. Page. He, he; I can never hit on's name.—There is such a league between my good man and he!—Is your wife at home, indeed?

Ford. Indeed she is.

Mrs. Page. By your leave, sir;—I am sick till I see her.
[*Exeunt* Mrs. Page and Robin, R.H.]

Ford. Has Page any brains? hath he any eyes? hath he any thinking? Sure, they sleep; he hath no use of them. Why, this boy will carry a letter twenty miles,

OF WINDSOR.

as easy as a cannon will shoot point-blank twelve score
 He pieces out his wife's inclination ; he gives her full
 motion and advantage ; and now she's going to my
 wife, and Falstaff's boy with her. A man may hear
 this shower sing in the wind !—and Falstaff's boy with
 her !—Good plots !—they are laid ! and our revolted
 wives share damnation together. Well ; I will take
 him, then torture my wife ; pluck the borrow'd veil of
 modesty from the so seeming mistress Page ; divulge
 Page himself for a secure and wilful Actæon.—(*The*
Clock strikes.)

The clock gives me my cue, and my assurance bids
 me search ; there I shall find Falstaff. I shall be rat-
 ther prais'd for this, than mock'd ; for it is as positive as
 the earth is firm, that Falstaff is there.—

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, SLENDER, HOST, EVANS,
 CAIUS, RUGBY, and SIMPLE, L.H.

Shal. Page, &c. Well met, master Ford.

Ford. Trust me, a good knot. I have good cheer at
 home ; and, I pray you, all go with me.

Shal. I must excuse myself, master Ford.

Slender. And so must I, sir ; we have appointed to dine
 with mistress Anne, and I would not break with her
 for more money than I'll speak of.

Shal. We have linger'd about a match between
 Anne Page and my cousin Slender, and this day we
 shall have our answer.

Slender. I hope, I have your good will, father Page.

Page. You have, master Slender ; I stand wholly
 for you :—but my wife, master doctor, is for you alto-
 gether.

Caius. Ay, by gar ! and the maid is love-a me ; my
 nursh-a. Quickly tell me so much.

Host. What say you to young master Fenton ? he
 capers, he dances, he has eyes of youth ; he writes
 verses, he speaks holiday ; (1) he smells April an

(1) Speaks out of the common way.

lay; he will carry't, he will carry't; 'tis in his buttons;(1) he will carry't.

Page. Not by my consent, I promise you. The gentleman is of no having,(2) he kept company with the wild Prince and Poins; he is of too high a region, he knows too much; my consent goes not that way.

Ford. I beseech you heartily, some of you go home with me to dinner; besides your cheer you shall have sport; I'll show you a monster.—Master doctor, you shall go;—so shall you, master Page;—and you, sir lugh.

Shal. Well, fare you well.—We shall have the freer looking at master Page's.

[*Exeunt Shallow, Slender, and Simple, L.H.*

Host. Farewell my hearts; I will to my honest night Falstaff, and drink canary with him.

[*Exit, L.H.*

Ford. I think I shall drink in pipe-wine first with him; I'll make him dance.—Will you go gentles?

[*Exeunt Ford, Page, and Evans, R.H.*

Caius. Go home, John Rugby, I come anon.

[*Exeunt; Caius, R.H. and Rugby, L.H.*

SCENE III.—*Ford's House.*

Enter MRS. FORD, and MRS. PAGE, R.H.

Mrs. Ford. What, John! what, Robert!

Mrs. Page. Quickly, quickly;—is the buck-basket—

Mrs. Ford. I warrant:—What, Robin, I say.

Enter JOHN, and ROBERT, L.H. with a Basket.

Mrs. Page. Come, come, come.

Mrs. Ford. Here, set it down.

(1) Alluding to an ancient custom among the country fellows, trying whether they should succeed with their mistresses, by carrying the *batchelor's buttons* (a plant of the *Lychnis* kind, whose seeds resemble a coat button in form,) in their pockets.

(2) No estate, fortune.

Mrs. Page. Give your men the charge ; we must be brief.

Mrs. Ford. Marry, as I told you before, John and Robert, be ready here hard-by in the brew-house ; and, when I suddenly call you, come forth, and (without any pause or staggering,) take this basket on your shoulders : that done, trudge with it in all haste, and carry it among the whitsters(1) in Datchet-mead, and there empty it in the muddy ditch, close by the Thames' side.

Mrs. Page. You will do it ?

Mrs. Ford. I have told them over and over ; they lack no direction. Be gone, and come when you are call'd.

[*Exeunt John and Robert, L.H.*]

Mrs. Page. Here comes little Robin.

Enter ROBIN, R.H.

Mrs. Ford. How now, my eyas-musket?(2) what news with you ?

Rob. My master, Sir John, is come in at the back door, mistress Ford, and requests your company.

Mrs. Page. You little Jack-a-lent,(3) have you been true to us ?

Rob. Ay, I'll be sworn. My master knows not of your being here ; and hath threaten'd to put me into everlasting liberty, if I tell you of it ; for he swears he'll turn me away.

Mrs. Page. Thou'rt a good boy : this secresy of thine shall be a tailor to thee, and shall make thee a new doublet and hose.—I'll go hide me.

(1) Blanchers of linen.

(2) *Eyas* is a young unfledg'd hawk, from the Italian, *Niaso*, which originally signified any young bird taken from the nest unfledged, afterwards a young hawk. The French, from hence, took their *niais*, and used it in both those significations ; to which they added a third, metaphorically, a *silly fellow*, *un garçon fort niais*, *un niais*. *Musket* signified a *sparrow-hawk*, or the smallest species of hawks. This, too, is from the Italian, *Muschetto*, a small hawk, as appears from the original signification of the word, namely, a *troublesome*, *stinging fly*.

(3) A *Jack-o'-lent* was a puppet thrown at in Lent, like Shrove cocks.

Mrs. Ford. Do so :—Go and tell thy master, I am alone.

[*Exit Robin, R.H.*]

Mistress Page, remember you your cue.

Mrs. Page. I warrant thee ; if I do not act it, hiss me.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Mrs. Ford. Go to then ;—we'll use this gross watery pumpkin ; we'll teach him to know turtles from jays.

Enter FALSTAFF, R.H.

Fal. Have I caught thee, my heavenly jewel ?—Why, this is the period of my ambition : O this blessed hour !

Mrs. Ford. O, sweet Sir John !

Fal. Mistress Ford, I cannot cog, I cannot prate, mistress Ford. Now shall I sin in my wish : I would thy husband were dead ; I'll speak it before the best lord, I would make thee my lady.

Mrs. Ford. I your lady, Sir John ! alas, I should be a pitiful lady.

Fal. Let the court of France show me such another ; I see how thine eye would emulate the diamond :—Thou hast the right arch'd bent of the brow that becomes the ship-tire, the tire-valiant, or any tire of Venetian admittance.(1)

Mrs. Ford. A plain kerchief, Sir John :—my brows become nothing else ; nor that well neither.

Fal. Thou art a traitor to say so : thou would'st make an absolute courtier : I see what thou wert, if fortune thy foe were not : nature is thy friend : come, thou canst not hide it.

Mrs. Ford. Believe me, there's no such thing in me.

Fal. What made me love thee ? Let that persuade thee, there's something extraordinary in thee. Come, I cannot cog, and say, thou art this and that, like a many of these lipping hawthorn-buds, that come like women in men's apparel, and smell like Bucklers-

(1) Of a fashion received or admitted from Venice.

bury(1) in simple-time; I cannot; but I love thee none but thee; and thou deservest it.

Mrs. Ford. Do not betray me, sir; I fear, you love mistress Page.

Fal. Thou might'st as well say, I love to walk by the counter-gate; which is as hateful to me as the reek of a lime-kiln.

Mrs. Ford. Well, heaven knows how I love you; and you shall one day find it.

Fal. Keep in that mind; I'll deserve it.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, I must tell you, so you do: or else I could not be in that mind.

Enter ROBIN, R.H.

Rob. Mistress Ford, mistress Ford! here's mistress Page at the door, looking wildly, and would needs speak with you presently. [*Exit*, R.H.]

Fal. She shall not see me; I will ensconce me behind the arras.

Mrs. Ford. 'Pray you, do, so; she's a very tattling woman. [*Exit Falstaff*, L.H.]

Enter ROBIN, and *Mrs. PAGE*, R.H.

What's the matter? How now?

Mrs. Page. O, mistress Ford, what have you done! You're sham'd, you are overthrown, you are undone for ever.

Mrs. Ford. What's the matter, good mistress Page?

Mrs. Page. O well a-day, mistress Ford! having an honest man to your husband, to give him such cause of suspicion!

Mrs. Ford. What cause of suspicion?

Mrs. Page. What cause of suspicion?—Out upon you!—how am I mistook in you?

Mrs. Ford. Why, alas! what's the matter?

(1) *Buchler's-bury*, in the time of Shakspeare was chiefly inhabited by druggists, who sold all kinds of herbs, green as well as dry.

Mrs. Page. Your husband's coming hither, woman, with all the officers in Windsor, to search for a gentleman, that, he says, is here now in the house, by your consent, to take an ill advantage of his absence.—You are undone.

Mrs. Ford. Speak louder.—(*Aside.*)—'Tis not so, I hope.

Mrs. Page. 'Pray heaven it be not so, that you have such a man here; but, 'tis most certain, your husband's coming, with half Windsor at his heels, to search for such a one. I come before to tell you: if you know yourself clear, why, I am glad of it: but, if you have a friend here, convey, convey him out. Be not amaz'd; call all your senses to you; defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your good life for ever.

Mrs. Ford. What shall I do?—There is a gentleman, my dear friend; and I fear not mine own shame, so much as his peril: I had rather than a thousand pound, he were out of the house.

Mrs. Page. For shame, never stand *you had rather*, and *you had rather*; your husband's here at hand, be-think you of some conveyance; in the house you cannot hide him.—O, how have you deceiv'd me!—Look, here is a basket; if he be of any reasonable stature, he may creep in here; and throw the linen upon him, as if it were going to bucking: or, (it is whiting-time,) (1) send him by your two men to Datchet-mead.

Mrs. Ford. He's too big to go in there:—What shall I do?

Enter FALSTAFF, L.H.

Fal. Let me see't, let me see't! O let me see't! I'll in, I'll in;—follow your friend's counsel;—I'll in.

Mrs. Page. What! Sir John Falstaff! Are these your letters, knight?

(1) Bleaching time.

Fal. I love thee, and none but thee;—help me away: let me creep in here; I'll never—(*He goes into the Basket, they cover him with the Linen.*)

Mrs. Page. Help to cover your master, boy: Call your men, mistress Ford:—[*Exit Robin, R.H.*].—You dissembling knight!

Mrs. Ford. What, John, Robert, John!

Enter JOHN, and ROBERT, L.H.

Go, take up these clothes here, quickly: Where's the cowl-staff? (1)—Look, how you drumble: (2) carry them to the laundress in Datchet-mead; quickly, —come.

Enter FORD, PAGE, CAIUS, and EVANS, R.H.

Ford. 'Pray you, come near: if I suspect without cause, why then make sport at me, then let me be your jest; I deserve it.—How now? whither bear you this?

Mrs. Ford. Why, what have you to do whither they bear it? you were best meddle with buck-washing.

Ford. Buck!—I would I could wash myself of the buck! Buck, buck, buck! Ay, buck; I warrant you, buck; and of the season too, it shall appear.

[*Exeunt John, and Robert, with the Basket, R.H.*]
Gentlemen, I have dream'd to-night; I'll tell you my dream.—Here, here, here be my keys; ascend my chambers, search, seek, find out: I'll warrant, we'll unkenne! the fox:—Let me stop this way first;—So now uncape. (3)

(1) A staff used for carrying a large tub or basket, with two handles. In *Essex* the word cowl is yet used for a tub.

(2) A drumble drone, in the western dialect, signifies a drone or humble-bee. Mrs. Page may therefore mean—How stupid and lazy you are.

(3) A term in Fox hunting, which signifies to dig out the fox when earthed.

Page. Good master Ford, be contented : you wrong yourself too much.

Ford. True, master Page.—Up, gentlemen ; you shall see sport anon ; follow me, gentlemen.

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Page. Nay, follow him, gentlemen ; see the issue of his search.

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Eva. This is fery fantastical humours, and jealousies.

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Caius. By gar, 'tis no de fashion of France : it is not jealous in France.

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Mrs. Page. Is there not a double excellency in this ?

Mrs. Ford. I know not which pleases me better, that my husband is deceiv'd, or Sir John.

Mrs. Page. What a taking was he in, when your husband ask'd who was in the basket !

Mrs. Ford. I think, my husband hath some special suspicion of Falstaff's being here ; for I never saw him so gross in his jealousy till now.

Mrs. Page. I will lay a plot to try that. And we will yet have more tricks with Falstaff.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we send that foolish carrion, mistress Quickly, to him, and excuse his throwing into the water ; and give him another hope, to betray him to another punishment ?

Mrs. Page. We'll do it ; let him be sent for to-morrow eight o'clock, to have amends.

Re-enter FORD, and PAGE, L.H.D.

Ford. I cannot find him : may be, the knave bragg'd that he could not compass.

Mrs. Page. Heard you that ?

Mrs. Ford. Ay, ay ; peace !—You use me well, master Ford, do you ?

Ford. Ay, I do so.

Mrs. Ford. Heaven make you better than your thoughts !

[*Exit*, R.H.]

Ford. Amen.

Mrs. Page. You do yourself mighty wrong, master Ford.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Ford. Ay, ay ; I must bear it.

Enter EVANS, and CAIUS, L.H.D.

Eva. If there be any pody in the house, and in the chambers, and in the coffers, and in the presses, heaven forgive my sins at the day of judgment !

Caius. By gar, nor I too ; dere is no bodies.

Page. Fic, fie, master Ford ! are you not asham'd ? What spirit, what devil suggests this imagination ? I would not have your distemper in this kind, for the wealth of Windsor Castle.

Ford. 'Tis my fault, master Page ; I suffer for it.

Eva. You suffer for a pad conscience : your wife is as honest a 'omans, as I will desires among five thousand, and five hundred too.

Caius. By gar, I see, 'tis an honest woman.

Ford. Well ;—I promis'd you a dinner.—Come, come, walk in the park.

Page. Let's go, gentlemen :—but trust me, we'll mock him,—I do invite you to-morrow morning to my house to breakfast ; after, we'll a-birding together ; I have a fine hawk for the bush : shall it be so ?

Ford. Any thing.—'Pray you, go, master Page.

[*Exeunt Ford, and Page, R.H.*]

Eva. I pray you now, remembrance to-morrow on the lousy knave, mine host.

Caius. Dat is good ; by gar, vit all my heart.

Eva. A lousy knave ; to have his gibes, and his mockeries.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*Page's House.*

Enter FENTON, and ANNE PAGE, R.H.

Fent. I see, I cannot get thy father's love ;
Therefore no more turn me to him, sweet Nan.

Anne. Alas ! how then ?

Fent. Why, thou must be thyself.
 He doth object, I am too great of birth ;
 And that, my 'state being gall'd with my expense,
 I seek to heal it only by his wealth :
 Besides these, other bars he lays before me,—
 My riots past, my wild societies ;
 And tells me, 'tis a thing impossible
 I should love thee, but as a property.

Anne. May be, he tells you true.

Fent. No, heaven so speed me in my time to come !
 Albeit, I will confess, thy father's wealth
 Was the first motive that I woo'd thee, Anne :
 Yet, wooing thee, I found thee of more value
 Than stamps in gold, or sums in sealed bags ;
 And 'tis the very riches of thyself
 That now I aim at.

Anne. Gentle master Fenton,
 Yet seek my father's love ; still seek it, sir :
 If opportunity and humble suit
 Cannot attain it, why then,—Hark you hither.
 (*They retire a little, L.H.*)

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, SHALLOW, *and* SLENDER, R.H.

Shal. Break their talk, mistress Quickly ; my kins-
 man shall speak for himself.

Slen. I'll make a shaft, or a bolt(1) on't : 'slid, 'tis
 but venturing.

Shal. Be not dismay'd.

Slen. No, she shall not dismay me : I care not for
 that,—but that I am afraid.

Quick. Hark ye ; master Slender would speak a word
 with you.

Anne. I come to him.—(*Comes down the Stage.*)—

This is my father's choice.

O, what a world of vile ill-favour'd faults
 Look handsome in three hundred pounds a-year !

(*Aside.*)

(1) A *shaft* was a general term for an *arrow*. A *bolt* was a thick short one, with a knob at the end of it. It was only employed to shoot birds with, and was commonly called a *bird bolt*.

Quick. And how does good master Fenton? Pray you, a word with you. (*Retires with Fenton.*)

Shal. She's coming; to her, coz. O boy, thou hadst a father! (*Slender Crosses to Centre.*)

Slen. I had a father, mistress Anne;—my uncle can tell you good jests of him;—'Pray you, uncle, tell mistress Anne the jest, how my father stole two geese out of a pen, good uncle.

Shal. Mistress Anne, my cousin loves you.

Slen. Ay, that I do; as well as I love any woman in Gloucestershire.

Shal. He will maintain you like a gentlewoman.

Slen. Ay, that I will, come cut and long-tail, (1) under the degree of a 'squire.

Shal. He will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure.

Anne. Good master Shallow, let him woo for himself.

Shal. Marry, I thank you for it; I thank you for that good comfort. She calls you, coz: I'll leave you.

[*Exit, R.H.*]

Anne. Now, master Slender.

Slen. Now, good mistress Anne.

Anne. What is your will?

Slen. My will? Od's heartlings, that's a pretty jest, indeed! I ne'er made my will yet, I thank heaven; I am not such a sickly creature, I give heaven praise.

Anne. I mean, master Slender, what would you with me?

Slen. Truly, for mine own part, I would little or nothing with you: Your father, and my uncle, have made motions: if it be my luck, so; if not, happy

(1) Come cut and long tail. i. e. come poor or rich, to offer himself as my rival. The following is said to be the origin of the phrase. According to the forest laws, the dog of a man, who had no right to the privilege of chase, was obliged to cut, or law his dog, among other modes of disabling him, by depriving him of his tail. A dog so cut was called a cut or curt-tail, and by contraction cur. Cut and long tail therefore signified the dog of a clown, and the dog of a gentleman.

man be his dole ! (1) They can tell you how things go, better than I can : You may ask your father ; here he comes.

Enter PAGE, MRS. PAGE, and SHALLOW, L.H.

Page. Now, master Slender :—Love him, daughter Anne.—

Why, how now ! What does master Fenton here ?
You wrong me, sir, thus still to haunt my house :
I told you, sir, my daughter is dispos'd of.

Fent. Nay, master Page, be not impatient.

Mrs. Page. Good master Fenton, come not to my child.

Page. She is no match for you.

Fent. Sir, will you hear me ?

Page. No, good master Fenton. (*Crosses to R.H.*)
Come, master Shallow ;—come, son Slender ; in :—
Knowing my mind, you wrong me, master Fenton.

[*Exeunt Page, Shallow, and Slender, R.H.*]

Quick. Speak to mistress Page.

Fent. Good mistress Page, for that I love your daughter

In such a righteous fashion as I do,
Perforce against all checks, rebukes, and manners,
I must advance the colours of my love,
And not retire : Let me have your good will.

Anne. Good mother, do not marry me to yon'd fool.

Mrs. Page. I mean it not ; I seek you a better husband.

Quick. That's my master, master doctor.

Anne. Alas, I had rather be set quick i'the earth.

Mrs. Page. Come, trouble not yourself : Good master Fenton,

I will not be your friend, nor enemy ;
My daughter will I question how she loves you,
And, as I find her, so am I affected ;

(1) A proverbial expression.

Till then, farewell, sir :—She must needs go in ;
Her father will be angry.

[Exeunt Mrs. Page, and Anne, R.H.D.]

Fent. Farewell, gentle mistress ; farewell, Nan.

Quick. This is my doing now :—Nay, said I, will you cast away your child on a fool, and a physician ? Look on master Fenton :—this is my doing.

Fent. I thank thee ; and I pray thee, once to-night(1) give my sweet Nan this ring : There's for thy pains.

[Exit, L.H.]

Quick. Now heaven send thee good fortune ! A kind heart he hath : a woman would run through fire and water for such a kind heart. But yet, I would my master had mistress Anne ; or, I would master Slender had her ; or, in sooth, I would master Fenton had her : I will do what I can for them all three ; for so I have promis'd, and I'll be as good as my word ; but speciously for master Fenton. Well, I must of another errand to Sir John Falstaff from my two mistresses : What a beast I am to slack it.(2)

[Exit, L.H.]

SCENE V.—*The Garter Inn.*

Enter FALSTAFF, and BARDOLPH, L.H.

Fal. Bardolph, I say.

Bard. Here, sir.

Fal. Go, fetch me a quart of sack ; put a toast in't.

[Exit Bardolph, L.H.]

Have I liv'd to be carried in a basket, like a barrow of butcher's offal ; and to be thrown into the Thames ? Well, if I be serv'd such another trick, I'll have my brains ta'en out, and butter'd, and give them to a dog for a new year's gift. The rogues slighted me into the river with as little remorse as they would have drown'd a bitch's blind puppies, fifteen i'the litter : and you may know by my size, that I have a kind of

(1) Sometime to-night.

(2) To neglect.

alacrity in sinking ; if the bottom were as deep as hell, I should down. I had been drown'd, but that the shore was shelvy and shallow ; a death that I abhor ; for the water swells a man ; and what a thing should I have been, when I had been swell'd ! I should have been a mountain of mummy.

Enter BARDOLPH, with the Sack, L.H.

Bard. Here's mistress Quickly, sir, to speak with you.

Fal. Come, let me pour in some sack to the Thames water ; for my belly's as cold, as if I had swallow'd snow-balls.—Call her in.

Bard. Come in, woman.

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, L.H.

Quick. By your leave ;—I cry you mercy :—Give your worship good-morrow.

Fal. Go, brew me a pottle of sack finely.

Bard. With eggs, sir ?

Fal. Simple of itself.— [*Exit Bardolph, L.H.*]
How now ?

Quick. Marry, sir, I come to your worship from mistress Ford.

Fal. Mistress Ford ! I have had ford enough : I was thrown into the ford ; I have my belly full of Ford.

Quick. Alas the day ! good heart, that was not her fault : she does so take on with her men, they mistook their erection.

Fal. So did I mine, to build upon a foolish woman's promise.

Quick. Well, she laments, sir, for it, that it would yearn your heart to see it. Her husband goes this morning a-birding : she desires you once more to come to her between eight and nine : I must carry her word quickly : she'll make you amends, I warrant you.

Fal. Well, I will visit her : Tell her so ; and bid her think what a man is : let her consider his frailty, and judge of my merit.

Quick. I will tell her.

Fal. Do so. Between nine and ten, say'st thou?

Quick. Eight and nine, sir.

Fal. Well, he gone: I will not miss her.

Quick. Peace be with you, sir! [*Exit, L.H.*]

Fal. I marvel, I hear not of master Brook; he sent me word to stay within: I like his money well.—O, here he comes.

Enter FORD, L.H. disguised.

Ford. 'Bless you, sir!

Fal. Now, master Brook?—you come to know what hath pass'd between me and Ford's wife?

Ford. That, indeed, Sir John, is my business.

Fal. Master Brook, I will not lie to you; I was at her house the hour she appointed me.

Ford. And how sped you, sir?

Fal. Very ill-favour'dly, master Brook.

Ford. How so, sir? Did she change her determination?

Fal. No, master Brook: but the peaking cornuto her husband, master Brook, dwelling in a continual 'larum of jealousy, comes me in the instant of our encounter, after we had embrac'd, kiss'd, protested, and as it were, spoke the prologue of our comedy; and at his heels a rabble of his companions, thither provok'd and instigated by his distemper, and, forsooth, to search his house for his wife's love.

Ford. What, while you were there?

Fal. While I was there.

Ford. And did he search for you, and could not find you?

Fal. You shall hear. As good luck would have it, comes in one mistress Page; gives intelligence of Ford's approach; and, by her invention, and Ford's wife's distraction, they convey'd me into a buck-basket.

Ford. A buck-basket!

Fal. By the lord, a buck-basket: ramm'd me in

with foul shirt's and smocks, socks, foul stockings, and greasy napkins; that, master Brook, there was the rankest compound of villainous smelt, that ever offend-ed nostril.

Ford. And how long lay you there?

Fal. Nay, you shall hear, master Brook, what I have suffer'd to bring this woman to evil for your good. Being thus cramm'd in the basket, a couple 'of Ford's knaves, his hinds, were call'd forth by their mistress, to carry me in the name of foul clothes to Datchet-lane: they took me on their shoulders; met the jealous knave their master in the door; who ask'd them once or twice what they had in their basket: I quak'd for fear, lest the lunatick knave would have search'd it; but fate, ordaining he should be a cuckold, held his hand. Well; on went he for a search, and away went I for foul clothes. But mark the sequel, master Brook: I suffer'd the pangs of three several deaths: first, an intolerable fright, to be detected with a jealous bell-wether: next, to be compass'd, like a good bilbo, (1) in the circumference of a peck, hilt to point, heel to head: and then, to be stopp'd in, like a strong distillation, with stinking clothes that fretted in their own grease: think of that,—a man of my kidney,—think of that,—that am as subject to heat, as butter; a man of continual dissolution and thaw; it was a miracle, to 'scape suffocation. And in the height of this bath, when I was more than half stew'd in grease, like a Dutth dish, to be thrown into the Thames, and cool'd, glowing hot, in that surge, like a horse-shoe: think of that,—hissing hot,—think of that, master Brook.

Ford. In good sadness, sir, I am sorry, that for my sake you have suffer'd all this. My suit then is desperate; you'll undertake her no more?

Fal. Master Brook, I will be thrown into *Ætna*, as I have been into Thames, ere I will leave her thus. Her husband is this morning gone a-birding: I have

as a Spanish blade, the excellence is flexibleness and

receiv'd from her another embassy of meeting : 'twixt eight and nine is the hour, master Brook.

Ford. 'Tis past eight already, sir.

Fal. Is it? I will then address(1) me to my appointment. Come to me at your convenient leisure, and you shall know how I speed; and the conclusion shall be crown'd with your enjoying her; Adieu.—You shall have her, master Brook; master Brook, you shall cuckold Ford. [*Exit, L.H.*]

Ford. Hum! ha! is this a vision? Is this a dream? do I sleep? Master Ford, awake; awake, master Ford; there's a hole made in your best coat, master Ford. 'This 'tis to be married! this 'tis to have linen, and buck-baskets!—Well, I will proclaim myself what I am: I will now take the lecher; he's at my house; he cannot 'scape me; 'tis impossible he should; he cannot creep into a halfpenny purse, nor into a pepper-box: but, lest the devil that guides him should aid him, I will search impossible places. 'Though what I am I cannot avoid; yet to be what I would not, shall not make me tame: if I have horns to make one mad, let the proverb go with me, I'll be horn mad. [*Exit, L.H.*]

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Ford's House.—The Buck-Basket in the Room.*

Enter FALSTAFF and MRS. FORD, R.H.

Fal. Mistress Ford, your sorrow hath eaten up my sufferance: I see, you are obsequious in your love, and I profess requital to a hair's breadth; not only mistress Ford, in the simple office of love, but in

(1) Make myself ready.

the accoutrement, complement, and ceremony of it. But are you sure of your husband now?

Mrs. Ford. He's a-birding, sweet Sir John.

Mrs. Page. (*Within, R.H.*) What ho, gossip Ford! what ho!

Mrs. Ford. Step into the chamber, Sir John.

[*Exit Falstaff, L.H.D.*]

Enter MRS. PAGE, R.H.

Mrs. Page. How now, sweetheart! Who's at home besides yourself?

Mrs. Ford. Why, none but mine own people.

Mrs. Page. Indeed?

Mrs. Ford. No, certainly.—Speak louder.

(*Aside.*)

Mrs. Page. Truly, I am so glad you have nobody here,—

Mrs. Ford. Why?

Mrs. Page. Why, woman, your husband is in his old luns-(1) again: he so takes on-(2) yonder with my husband so rails against all married mankind; so curses all Eve's daughters, of what complexion soever; and so buffets himself on the forehead, crying, *Pier-out, peer out!*-(3) that any madness, I ever yet beheld, seem'd but tameness, civility, and patience, to this his di-temper he is in now: I am glad the fat knight is not here.

Mrs. Ford. Why, does he talk of him?

Mrs. Page. Of none but him; and swears, he was carried out, the last time he search'd for him, in a basket: protests to my husband, he is now here; and hath drawn him and the rest of their company from their sport, to make another experiment of his suspi-

(1) Lunacy, frenzy. It is a mode of expression with the French. *Il y a de la lunte*—i. e. he has got the moon in his head; he is frantick.

(2) *To take on*, which is now used for to grieve, seems to be used by our author, for to rage.

(3) *Peer out* is, *appear horns*.

cion: but I am glad the knight is not here; now he shall see his own foolery

Mrs. Ford. I am undone!—the knight is here.

Mrs. Page. Why, then thou art utterly sham'd, and he's but a dead man. What a woman are you!—Away with him, away with him; better shame than murder.

Mrs. Ford. Which way should he go? How should I bestow him? Shall I put him into the basket again?

Enter FALSTAFF, L.H.D.

Fal. No, I'll come no more i'the basket: May I not go out, ere he come?

Mrs. Page. Alas, three of master Ford's brothers watch the door with pistols,⁽¹⁾ that none should issue out; otherwise you might slip away ere he came.—But what make you here?⁽²⁾

Fal. What shall I do? I'll creep up into the chimney.

Mrs. Ford. There they always use to discharge their birding-pieces: creep into the kiln-hole.

Fal. Where is it?

Mrs. Ford. He will seek there, on my word. Neither press, coffer, chest, trunk, well, vault, but he hath an abstract for the remembrance of such places, and goes to them by his note: There is no hiding you in the house.

Fal. I'll go out then.

Mrs. Ford. If you go out in your own semblance, you die, Sir John. Unless you go out disguis'd,—
Mrs. Page, how might we disguise him?

Mrs. Page. Alas the day, I know not. There is no woman's gown big enough for him; otherwise he might put on a hat, a muffler, and a kerchief, and so escape.

Fal. Good hearts, devise something; any extremity rather than a mischief.

(1) This is one of Shakspeare's anachronisms.

(2) What *do* you here?

Mrs. Ford. My maid's aunt, the fat woman of Brentford, has a gown above.

Mrs. Page. On my word it will serve him; she's as big as he is: and there's her thrum'd hat, and her muffler too: (1) Run up, Sir John.

Mrs. Ford. Go, go, sweet Sir John: Mistress Page and I will look some linen for your head.

Mrs. Page. Quick, quick; we'll come dress you straight; put on the gown the while.

[*Exit Falstaff*, L.H.D.]

Mrs. Ford. I would my husband would meet him in this shape: he cannot abide the old woman of Brentford; he swears she's a witch; forbade her my house, and hath threaten'd to beat her.—But is my husband coming?

Mrs. Page. Ay, in good sadness, is he; and talks of the basket too, howsoever he hath had intelligence.

Mrs. Ford. We'll try that; for I'll appoint my men to carry the basket again, to meet him at the door with it, as they did last time.

Mrs. Page. Nay, but he'll be here presently; let's go dress him like the witch of Brentford.

Mrs. Ford. I'll first direct my men what they shall do with the basket. Go up, I'll bring linen for him straight.

[*Exit* L.H.D.]

Mrs. Page. Hang him, dishonest varlet! we cannot misuse him enough.—

We'll leave a proof, by that which we will do,
Wives may be merry, and yet honest too:
We do not act, that often jest and laugh;
'Tis old, but true, *Still swine eat all the draff.*

[*Exit*, L.H.D.]

Enter MRS. FORD, with a Kerchief in her hand,—
JOHN and ROBERT, L.H.D.

Mrs. Ford. Go, sirs, take the basket again on your

A thrum'd hat was made of very coarse woollen cloth. The
was a thin piece of linen which covered the lips and the

shoulders; your master is hard at door; if he bid you set it down, obey him: quickly dispatch. [*Exit, L.H.D.*]

John. Come, come, take it up.

Robert. 'Pray heaven, it be not full of the knight again.

John. I hope not.

Enter CAIUS, FORD, PAGE, and EVANS, R.H.

Ford. Ay, but if it prove true, master Page, have you any way then to unfool me again?—Set down the basket, villains:—Somebody call my wife.—

[*Exit John, L.H.D.*]

You, youth in a basket!—O, you panderly rascals! there's a knot, a gang, a pack, a conspiracy, against me: Now shall the devil be sham'd.—What! wife I say! come, come forth; behold what honest clothes you send forth to bleaching.

Page. Why this passes! (1) Master Ford, you are not to go loose any longer; you must be pinion'd.

Eva. Why this is lunaticks! this is mad as a mad dog!

Caius. *Ma foi*, master Ford, dis is not vell; *ma foi*.

Enter JOHN, and MRS. FORD, L.H.D.

Ford. So say I too, sir.—Why, wife, wife,—Come hither mistress Ford;—mistress Ford, the honest woman, the modest wife, the virtuous creature, that hath the jealous fool to her husband!—I suspect without cause, mistress, do I?

Mrs. Ford. Heaven be my witness, you do, if you suspect me in any dishonesty.

Ford. Well said, brazen-face; hold it out.—Come forth, sirrah. (*Pulls the Clothes out of the Basket.*)

Page. This passes!

Mrs. Ford. Are you not asham'd? let the clothes alone.

(1) One of the obsolete senses of the verb, *to pass*, is *to go beyond bounds*.

Ford. I shall find you anon.

Eva. 'Tis unreasonable! Will you take up your wife's clothes? Come away.

Ford. Master Page, as I am a man, there was one conveyed out of my house yesterday in this basket:—Why may not he be there again? In my house I am sure he is: my intelligence is true: my jealousy is reasonable.—Pluck me out all the linen.

Mrs. Ford. If you find a man there he shall die a flea's death.

Page. Here's no man.

Caius. I shall tink dis is not vell, master Ford; dis wrong-a you.

Ford. Well, he's not here I seek for.

Page. No, nor no where else but in your brain.

Ford. Help to search my house this one time; if I find not what I seek, show no colour for my extremity, let me for ever be your table sport; let them say of me, *As jealous as Ford, that search'd a hollow walnut for his wife's leman.*(1) Satisfy me once more, once more search with me.

[*Exeunt John and Robert, R.H.*]

Mrs. Ford. What hoa, mistress Page! come you, and the old woman, down; my husband will come into the chamber.

Ford. Old woman! what old woman's that?

Mrs. Ford. Why, it is my maid's aunt, of Brentford.

Ford. A witch, a quean, an old cozening quean! Have I not forbid her my house? She comes of errands, does she? We are simple men; we do not know what's brought to pass under the profession of fortune-telling. She works by charms, by spells, by the figure, and such daubery(2) as this is, beyond our element: we

(1) *Leman*, i.e. lover, is derived from *leef*, Dutch, *beloved*, and

(2) Such gross falsehood and imposition. In our author's time a *dauber* and a *plasterer* were synonymous. "To lay it on with a trowel," was a phrase of that time, applied to one who uttered a *romance*.

know nothing.—Come down you witch ; you hag you ; come down, I say.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, good sweet husband :—good gentlemen let him not strike the old woman.

Enter FALSTAFF in Woman's Clothes, led by
MRS. PAGE, L.H.D.

Mrs. Page. Come, mother Prat, come, give me your hand.

Ford. I'll prat her :—Out of my door, you witch !
(*Beats him.*) you hag, you baggage, you polecat, you ronyon ! (1) out ! out ! I'll conjure you, I'll fortune-tell you. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mrs. Page. Are you not asham'd ? I think you have kill'd the poor woman.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, he will do it :—'Tis a goodly credit for you.

Ford. Hang her, witch !

Kva. By yea and no, I think the 'oman is a witch indeed : I like not when a 'omans has a great peard ; (2) I spy a great peard under her muffler.

Ford. Will you follow, gentlemen ? I beseech you follow ; see but the issue of my jealousy ; if I cry out thus upon no trail, (3) never trust me when I open again. [*Exit, R.H.D.*]

Page. Let's obey his humour a little further. Come gentlemen.

[*Exeunt all but Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page, R.H.D.*]

Mrs. Page. Trust me, he beat him most pitifully.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, by the mass, that he did not ; he beat him most unpitifully, methought.

Mrs. Page. I'll have the cudgel hallow'd and hung o'er the altar ; it hath done meritorious service.

(1) *Ronyon*, applied to a woman, means, as far as can be traced much the same with *scall*, or *scab*, spoken of a man.

(2) One of the marks of a supposed witch was a beard.

(3) The expression is taken from the hunters. *Trail*, is the left by the passage of the game. *To cry out*, is to *open*, or *bark*.

Mrs. Ford. What think you? may we, with the warrant of womanhood, and the witness of a good conscience, pursue him with any further revenge?

Mrs. Page. The spirit of wantonness is sure scared out of him.

Mrs. Ford. Shall we tell our husbands how we have served him?

Mrs. Page. Yes, by all means; if it be but to crape the figures out of your husband's brains. If they can find in their hearts, the poor unvirtuous father might shall be any further afflicted, we two will still be the ministers.

Mrs. Ford. I'll warrant they'll have him publicly ham'd; and methinks there would be no period to the jest, should he not be publicly sham'd.

Mrs. Page. Come, to the forge with it then,—hapse it; I would not have things cool.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE II.—*The Garter Inn.*

Enter FENTON and Host, R.H.

Host. Master Fenton, talk not to me.

Fent. Yet hear me speak. Assist me in my purpose;

And, as I am a gentleman, I'll give thee a hundred pound in gold.

Host. I will hear you, master Fenton.

Fent. From time to time I have acquainted you with the dear love I bear to fair Anne Page; Who, mutually, hath answer'd my affection:—Now, here it rests,—that you'll procure the vicar to stay for us at church, 'twixt twelve and one; And, in the lawful name of marrying, To give our hearts united ceremony.

Host. Well, I'll to the vicar;

Bring you the maid, you shall not lack a priest.

Fent. So shall I evermore be bound to thee.

[*Exeunt*, L.H.]

SCENE III.—*Ford's House.*

*Enter EVANS, PAGE, MRS. PAGE, FORD, MRS. FORD,
and CAIUS, L.H.*

Eva. 'Tis one of the best discretions of a 'oman as ever I did look upon.

Page. And did he send you both these letters at an instant?

Mrs. Page. Within a quarter of an hour.

Ford. Pardon me, wife. Henceforth do what thou wilt;

I rather will suspect the sun with cold,
Than thee with wantonness; now doth thy honour stand,

In him that was of late a heretick,
As firm as faith.

Page. 'Tis well, 'tis well; no more;—
But let our plot go forward: let our wives
Yet once again, to make us publick sport,
Appoint a meeting with this old fat fellow,
Where we may take him and disgrace him for it.

Ford. There is no better way than that they spoke of.

Page. How! to send him word they'll meet him in
the park

At midnight! fie, fie; he will never come.

Eva. You say he has been thrown in the rivers;
and hath been grievously peaten, as an old 'oman:
methinks there should be terrors in him, that he should
not come; methinks his flesh is punish'd, he shall have
no desires.

Caius. So tink I too, by gar.

Mrs. Ford. Devise but how you'll use him when he
comes,

And let us two devise to bring him thither.

Mrs. Page. There is an old tale goes, that Herne,
the hunter,

Sometime a keeper here in Windsor forest,

Doth all the winter time, at still midnight,
Walk round about an oak, with great ragg'd horns;
And makes milch-kine yield blood, and shakes a chain
In a most hideous and dreadful manner.
You've heard of such a spirit; and well you know,
The superstitious idle-headed eld
Receiv'd, and did deliver to our age,
This tale of Herne the hunter for a truth.

Page. Why, yet there want not many that do fear
In deep of night to walk by this Herne's oak;—
But what of this?

Mrs. Ford. Marry, this is our device;
That Falstaff at that oak shall meet with us,
Disguis'd like Herne, with huge horns on his head.

Page. Well, let it not be doubted but he'll come,
And in this shape? When you have brought him
thither,

What shall be done with him? what is your plot?

Mrs. Page. That likewise have we thought upon.—
Nan Page my daughter, and my little son,
And three or four more of their growth, we'll dress
Like urchins, ouphes, (1) and fairies, green and white,
With rounds of waxen tapers on their heads,
And rattles in their hands; upon a sudden,
As Falstaff, she, and I, are newly met,
Let them from forth a saw-pit rush at once
With some diffused (2) song: upon their sight,
We two in great amazedness will fly;
Then let them all encircle him about,
And, fairy-like, to pinch the unclean knight;
And ask him, why, that hour of fairy revel,
In their so sacred paths he dares to tread
In shape profane?

Mrs. Ford. And till he tell the truth,
Let the supposed fairies pinch him sound. (3)

Eva. It is admirable pleasures, and fery honest
knaveries.

(1) *Ouph* is the Teutonick word for a *fairy*, or *goblin*.

(2) *Wild, irregular.*

(3) *That is, soundly.* The adjective used as an adverb.

Mrs. Ford. Let us about it.

All. Come, come.

[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Garter Inn.*

Enter Host¹, and SIMPLE, R.H.

Host. What would'st thou have, boor? what, thick skin? speak, breathe, discuss; brief, short, quick snap.

Simp. Marry, sir, I come to speak with Sir John Falstaff from master Slender.

Host. There's his chamber, his house, his castle his standing-bed, and truckle-bed : (1) Go, knock and call; he'll speak like an *Anthropophaginian* (2) unto thee : Knock, I say.

Simp. There's an old woman, a fat woman, gone up into his chamber; I'll be so bold as stay, sir, till she come down : I come to speak with her, indeed.

Host. Ha! a fat woman! the knight may be robb'd I'll call.—Bully knight! Bully Sir John! speak from thy lungs military : Art thou there? it is thine host, thine Ephesian, calls.

Fal. (*Within, L.H.*) How now, mine host?

Host. Here's a Bohemian Tartar tarries the coming down of thy fat woman, Let her descend, bully, let her descend; my chambers are honourable. Fie! privacy! fie!

Enter FALSTAFF, L.H.D.F.

Fal. There was, mine host, an old fat woman even now with me; but she's gone.

Simp. 'Pray you, sir, was't not the wise woman of Brentford? (3)

(1) The usual furniture of chambers in that time was a standing bed, under which was a *truckle-truck*, or *running bed*; in the standing bed lay the master, and in the truckle bed the servant.

(2) A cannibal.

(3) In our author's time female dealers in palmistry and fortune telling were usually denominated *wise women*.

Fal. Ay, marry, was it, muscle-shell(1) What would you with her?

Simp. My master, master Slender, sent to her, seeing her go through the streets, to know, sir, whether one Nym, sir, that beguil'd him of a chain, had the chain, or no.

Fal. I spake with the old woman about it.

Simp. And what says she, I pray, sir?

Fal. Marry, she says, that the very same man, that beguil'd master Slender of his chain, cozen'd him of it.

Simp. I would, I could have spoken with the woman herself; I had other things to have spoke, with her too, from him.

Fal. What are they? let us know.

Host. Ay, come; quick.

Simp. I may not conceal them, sir.

Fal. Conceal them, or thou diest.

Simp. Why, sir, they were nothing but about mistress Anne Page; to know if it were my master's fortune to have her, or no.

Fal. 'Tis, 'tis his fortune.

Simp. What, sir?

Fal. To have her,—or no: Go; say, the woman told me so.

Simp. May I be so bold to say so, sir?

Fal. Ay, sir Tike; who more bold?

Simp. I thank your worship: I shall make my master glad with these tidings. [Exit, R.H.]

Host. Thou art clerkly,(2) thou art clerkly, Sir John: Was there a wise woman with thee?

Fal. Ay, that there was, mine host; one that hath taught me more wit than ever I learn'd before in my life: and I paid nothing for it neither, but was paid for my learning.—(3) [Exit Host, L.H.]

If it should come to the ear of the court how I have

(1) He calls Simple *muscle-shell*, because he stands with his mouth open.

Scholar-like.

alludes to the beating which he had just received. To author's time, often signified to beat.

been transform'd, and how my transformation hath been wash'd and cudgel'd, they would melt me out of my fat, drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me; I warrant they would whip me with their fine wits, till I were as crest-fall'n as a dried pear.⁽¹⁾ I never prosper'd since I foreswore myself at *Primero*.⁽²⁾ Well, if my wind were but long enough to say my prayers, I would repent.—

Enter MRS. QUICKLY, with a Letter, L.H.

Now! whence come you?

Quick. From the two parties, forsooth.

Fal. The devil take one party, and his dam the other, and so they shall be both bestow'd! I have suffer'd more for their sakes, more than the villainous inconstancy of man is able to bear.

Quick. And have not they suffer'd? yes, I warrant; speciously one of them; mistress Ford, good heart, is beaten black and blue, that you cannot see a white spot about her.

Fal. What tell'st thou me of black and blue? I was beaten myself into all the colours of the rainbow; and I was like to be apprehended for the witch of Brentford; but that my admirable dexterity of wit, counterfeiting the action of an old woman, delivered me, the knave constable had set me i'the stocks, i'the common stocks, for a witch.

Quick. Sir, let me speak, and you shall hear how things go; and I warrant, to your content. Here is a letter will say somewhat. (*Falstaff reads the Letter.*) Good hearts, what ado here is to bring you together! sure, one of you does not serve heaven well, that you are so cross'd.

Fal. 'Pr'ythee, no' more prattling:—go—I'll hold

(1) *Pears*, when they are *dried*, become flat, and loose the erect and oblong form that, in their natural state, distinguishes them from apples.

(2) A game at cards; and in Shakspeare's time the fashionable game.

—This is the third time : I hope, good luck lies in odd numbers. Away.

Quick. I'll provide you a chain ; and I'll do what I can to get you a pair of horns.

Fal. Away, I say ; time wears : hold up your head, and mince.(1) [Exeunt, R.H.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—A Street.

Enter PAGE, SHALLOW, and SLENDER, L.H.

Page. Come, come ; we'll couch i'the castle-ditch, till we see the light of our fairies.—Remember, son Slender, my daughter.

Slen. Ay, forsooth ; I have spoke with her, and we have a pay-word(2) how to know one another. I come to her in white ; and cry, *mum* ; she cries, *budget* ; and by that we know one another.

Shal. That's good, too : But what needs either your *mum*, or her *budget* ? the white will decipher her well enough.

Page. The night is dark ; light and spirits will become it well. No man means evil but the devil, and we shall know him by his horns. Let's away ; follow me. [Exeunt, R.H.]

Enter MRS. PAGE, MRS. FORD, and CAIUS, L.H.

Mrs. Page. Master Doctor, my daughter is in green : when you see your time, take her by the hand, away with her to the deanery, and dispatch it quickly : Go before into the park ; we two must go together.

Walk with affected dignity.

(2) A watch-word.

Caius. I know vat I have to do: Adieu. [*Exit, R.H.*]

Mrs. Page. Fare you well, sir.—My husband will not rejoice so much at the abuse of Falstaff, as he will chafe at the doctor's marrying my daughter: but 'tis no matter: better a little chiding, than a great deal of heart-break.

Mrs. Ford. Where is Nan, now, and her troop of fairies? and the Welch devil, Evans?

Mrs. Page. They are all couch'd in a pit hard by Herne's oak,⁽¹⁾ with obscur'd lights; which, at the very instant of Falstaff's and our meeting, they will at once display to the night.

Mrs. Ford. That cannot choose but amaze him.

Mrs. Page. If he be not amaz'd, he will be mock'd; if he be amaz'd, he will every way be mock'd.

Mrs. Ford. We'll betray him finely.

Mrs. Page. Against such lewdsters,
Those that betray them do no treachery.

Mrs. Ford. The hour draws on:—To the oak, to the oak!
[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE II.—*Windsor Park.*

Enter EVANS and Fairies, L.H. The Fairies lay hold of each others garment, and run after Evans round the Stage.

Eva. Trib, trib, fairies; come; and remember your parts: be pold, I pray you; follow me into the pit; and when I give the watch-ords, do as I bid you; Come, come, trib, trib.
[*Exeunt, R.H.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Part of the Park.* *A Clock strikes Twelve.*

Enter FALSTAFF, with a Buck's Head on, clanking a Chain, L.H.

Fal. The Windsor bell hath struck twelve; the

(1) An oak, which may be that alluded to by Shakespeare, is standing close to a pit, in Windsor Forest. I have been told that it is the oak of Herne.

MERRY WIVES

Inde draws on : Now, the gods assist me !—'Remember, Jove, thou wast a bull for thy Europa ; love sit on thy horns.—For me, I am here a Windsor stag ; and the fattest, I think, 't' the forest.—Who comes ere ? my doe.

Enter MRS. FORD and MRS. PAGE, R.H.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John ?—Art thou there, my deer ?

Fal. Let the sky rain potatoes : let it thunder to the tune of *Green Sleeves* ; hail kissing-comfits, and snow-eribgoes ; let there come a tempest of provocation, (1), I will shelter me here.

Mrs. Ford. Mistress Page is come with me, sweet-heart.

Fal. Divide me like a bribe-buck, (2) each a haunch ; I will keep my sides to myself, my shoulders for the fellow of this walk, (3) and my horns I bequeath your husbands. Am I a woodman ? ha ! (4) Speak I like Herne the hunter ?—Why, now is Cupid a child of conscience ; he makes restitution. As I am a true spirit, welcome !—(*Noise by the Fairies within, L.H.*)

Mrs. Page. Alas ! what noise ?

Mrs. Ford. Heaven forgive our sins !

Fal. What should this be ?

Mrs. Ford.

Mrs. Page. } Away, away.

[*Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page run away, L.H.*]

Fal. They are fairies : he, that speaks to them, shall die :

Potatoes, when they were first introduced into England were used to be strong provocations. *Kissing-comfits* were sugar-comfits, perfumed to make the breath sweet. *Eringoes*, like potatoes, were esteemed to be stimulatives.

A buck, sent for a bribe.

It is that district in the forest to which the jurisdiction of the keeper extends.

Inde was an attendant on the officer called *Forrester*. Inde, used in a wanton sense, for one who chooses the subject of his pursuit.

OF WINDSOR.

Enter EVANS, and others, dressed like Fairies, R.H.

I'll wink and couch; no man their work must eye.

(Lies down upon his face.)

Eva. Our dance of custom, round about the oak
Of Herne the hunter, let us not forget.

'Pray you, lock hand in hand; yourselves in order
set:—

But, stay, I smell a man of middle earth. (1)

Fal. Heavens defend me from that Welch fairy!
Lest he transform me to a piece of cheese!

*(They pinch him.—A noise of hunting is made within.
All the Fairies, except Evans run away. Falstaff
pulls off his Buck's Head, and rises.)*

Enter FORD, PAGE, MRS. FORD, and MRS. PAGE, L.H.

Page. Nay, do not fly: I think, we have watch'd
you now;

Will none but Herne the hunter, serve your turn?

Mrs. Page. Now, good Sir John, how like you
Windsor wives?

See you these, husband? do not these fair yokes
Become the forest better than the town?

Ford. Now, sir, who's a cuckold now?—Master
Brook, Falstaff's a knave, a cuckoldly knave; here are
his horns, master Brook: And, master Brook, he hath
enjoyed nothing of Ford's but his buck-basket, his
cudgel, and twenty pounds of money; which must be
paid to master Brook.

Mrs. Ford. Sir John, we have had ill luck; we
could never meet. I will never take you for my love
again, but I will always count you my deer.

Fal. I do begin to perceive, that I am made an ass.

Ford. Ay, and an ox too; both the proofs are evi-
dant.

(1) Spirits are supposed to inhabit the
caves to dwell underground; men, therefore,

Fal. And these are not fairies? I was three or four times in the thought, they were not fairies: and yet the guiltiness of my mind, the sudden surprise of my powers, drove the grossness of the foppery into a received belief, that they were fairies. See now, how wit may be made a Jack-a-lent, when 'tis upon ill employment!

Eva. Sir John Falstaff, serve heaven, and leave your desires, and fairies will not pinse you.

Ford. Well said, fairy Hugh.

Eva. And leave you your jealousies too, I pray you.

Ford. I will never mistrust my wife again, till thou art able to woo her in good English.

Fal. Have I laid my brain in the sun, and dried it, that it wants matter to prevent so gross o'er-reaching as this? Am I ridden with a Welch goat too? 'tis time I were choaked with a piece of toasted cheese.

Eva. Sees is not good to give putter; your pelly is all putter.

Fal. Seese and putter! Have I liv'd to stand at the taunt of one that makes fitters of English?

Mrs. Page. Why, Sir John, do you think, though we would have thrust virtue out of our hearts by the head and shoulders, that ever the devil could have made you our delight?

Ford. What, a hodge pudding? a bag of flax?

Mrs. Ford. A puff'd man?

Page. Old, cold, wither'd, and of intolerable entails.

Ford. And one that is as slanderous as Satan?

Page. And as poor as Job?

Ford. And as wicked as his wife?

Eva. And given to fornications, and to taverns, and sack, and wine, and metheglins, and to drinkings, and swearings, and starings, pribbles, and prabbles?

Fal. Well, I am your theme; you have the start of me: I am dejected; I am not able to answer the Welch flannel; ignorance itself is a plummet o'er me: use me as you will.

Ford. Marry, sir, we'll bring you to Windsor, to

one master Brook, that you have cozened of money, to whom you should have been a pander; over and above that you have suffered, I think, to repay that money will be a biting affliction.

Mrs. Ford. Nay, husband, let that go to make amends:

Forgive that sum, and so we'll all be friends.

Ford. Well, here's my hand; all's forgiven at last.

Page. Yet be cheerful, knight: thou shalt eat a posset to-night at my house; where I will desire thee to laugh at my wife, that now laughs at thee: Tell her, master Slender hath married her daughter.

Mrs. Page. Doctors doubt that; if Anne Page be my daughter, she is, by this, Doctor Caius' wife.

(*Aside.*)

Enter SLENDER, R.H.

Slen. Whoo, ho! ho! father Page!

Page. Son! how now? how now, son? have you despatch'd?

Slen. Despatch'd!—I'll make the best in Gloucestershire know on't; would I were hang'd, la, else.

Page. Of what, son?

Slen. I came yonder at Eaton to marry mistress Anne Page, and she's a great lubberly boy: If it had not been 'ithe church, I would have swing'd him, or he should have swing'd me. If I did not think it had been Anne Page, would I might never stir, and 'tis a post-master's boy.

Page. Upon my life, then you took the wrong.

Slen. What need you tell me that? I think so, when I took a boy for a girl; If I had been married to him, for all he was in woman's apparel, I would not have had him.

Page. Why, this is your own folly. Did not I tell you, how you should know my daughter by her garments?

Slen. I went to her in white, (*Crosses to L.H.*) and cry'd, *mum*, and she cry'd *budget*, ~~an~~ Anne, and I had

appointed; and yet it was not Anne, but a post-master's-boy. [Exit, L.H.]

Mrs. Page. Good George, be not angry: I knew of your purpose; turned my daughter into green; and, indeed, she is now with the doctor at the deanery, and there married.

Enter CAIUS, R.H.

Caius. Vere is mistress Page? By gar, I am cozen'd: I ha' married *un garçon*, a boy; *un païsan*, by gar, a boy; it is not Anne Page: by gar, I am cozened.

Mrs. Page. Why, did you take her in green?

Caius. Ay, by gar, and 'tis a boy: be gar, I'll raise all Windsor. [Exit, L.H.]

Ford. This is strange: Who hath got the right Anne?

Page. My heart misgives me: Here comes master Fenton.

Enter FENTON, and ANNE PAGE, R.H.D.E.

How now, master Fenton?

Anne. Pardon, good father! good my mother, pardon!

Page. Now, mistress? how chance you went not with master Slender?

Mrs. Page. Why went you not with master Doctor, maid?

Fent. You do amaze(1) her: Hear the truth of it. You would have married her, Where there was no proportion held in love. The truth is, She and I long since contracted, Are now so sure, that nothing can dissolve us. The offence is holy, that she hath committed: Since therein she doth evitate and shun A thousand irreligious cursed hours, Which forced marriage would have brought upon her.

Ford. Stand not amaz'd : here is no remedy :—
In love, the heavens themselves do guide the state;—
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by fate.

Fal. I am glad, though you have ta'en a special
stand to strike at me, that your arrow hath glanc'd.

Page. Well, what remedy? Fenton, heaven give
thee joy!

What cannot be eschew'd, must be embrac'd.

Fal. When night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are
chas'd.

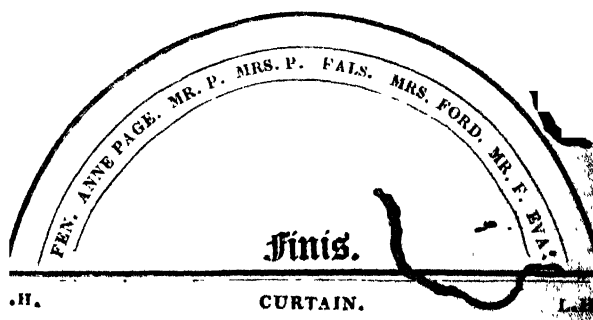
Eva. I will dance, and eat plums, at your wedding.

Mrs. Page. Well I will muse no further :—Master
Fenton,

Heaven give yon many, many merry days!—
Good husband, let us every one go home,
And laugh this sport o'er by a country fire;
Sir John and all.

Ford. Let it be so :—Sir John,
To master Brook you yet shall hold your word ;
For he, to night, shall sleep with mistress Ford.

Disposition of the Characters when the Curtain falls



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